

## Appendix 1

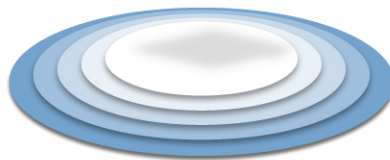
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*“Educating Evolving: Maine’s Plan for Putting Learners First” (Maine DOE Strategic Plan)*



# EducationEvolving

Maine's Plan for Putting Learners First



Maine Department of Education

January 2012

## About the Plan

Almost immediately after he was named Commissioner of Education in March 2011, Stephen Bowen traveled to school districts across Maine and spoke to students, teachers, school administrators and community members about what they saw as the challenges confronting Maine's schools and what role they saw for the Maine Department of Education in confronting those challenges.

The introductory essay, which begins on page 3, describes Commissioner Bowen's response to what he heard with regard to the direction Maine needs to take in order to realize the vision of its people being among the best educated in the world, and all its students graduating prepared to succeed in college, careers and civic life.

The impetus for the plan itself came in response to the concern, which the Commissioner heard repeatedly as he spoke with educators and policymakers around Maine, that the Department of Education lacked direction. In response, the Commissioner and Department staff reviewed feedback from the tour of Maine schools, and began organizing that feedback into a handful of core priority areas. The five core priority areas that resulted, described more fully in the pages that follow, were then broken down into subcategories, with specific goals, objectives and action steps attached to each.

In response to concerns that resources are lacking at both the state and local levels to implement a comprehensive and far-reaching strategic plan, efforts were made to ensure that the action steps for each goal and objective flowed from a relatively limited set of overarching strategies. The list below briefly describes the basic strategies used throughout the plan. The specific action steps that accompany each goal and objective provide more detail.

Strategy	Description
Planning and Implementation	Working with stakeholders, the Department will create and implement a detailed plan, including timelines, to advance the stated goal.
Regionalization	The Department will work with communities and school districts to support collaboration and help build regional capacities to advance the stated goal.
Best Practices	The Department will develop strategies to research and report on effective educational practices being used in Maine's schools today.
Collaboration and Communication	The Department will work with stakeholders and other partners to advance stated goals, leveraging technology to share information and best practices.
Policy	The Department will pursue statutory or rule changes to advance goals and objectives.
DOE Initiatives	The Department will strategically target staff and other resources to support the stated goal and objective.

As this plan is implemented, Department staff will collaborate with educators in the field to develop a balanced scorecard to track progress on action steps, the achievement of stated objectives and progress on reaching the goals outlined for each subcategory.

# Strategic Plan Framework

*Building an education system from the learner out*

## Effective, Learner-Centered Instruction

- Rigorous standards and aligned curricula
- Learner-centered instructional practices
- Assessment systems that provide timely, accurate data on achievement and growth
- Information systems that track learner growth over time.

## Great Teachers and Leaders

- Standards for teacher and leader effectiveness
- Initial preparation and professional development programs that are rigorous, relevant, and data driven
- Next-generation evaluation systems for teachers and leaders
- Communities of practice designed to foster continuous improvement

## Multiple Pathways for Learner Achievement

- Advancement based on demonstration of mastery
- Student voice and choice in the demonstration of learning
- Expanded learning options
- "Anytime, anywhere" learning

## Comprehensive School and Community Supports

- Effective and efficient services for learners with special needs
- Coordinated health and wellness programs
- A commitment to community and family engagement
- Career and workforce partnerships

## Coordinated and Effective State Support

- Seamless integration of educational programs from early childhood into adulthood
- Adequate and equitable state resources for Maine's schools
- Comprehensive integration of technology
- A robust and transparent accountability and improvement system



Maine Department of Education, 2012

# The Case for Change

## The Challenges We Face and a Way Forward

For generations, the educators in Maine's public school system have worked tirelessly to meet the educational needs of the students in their care, and their unwavering effort has been evident. Maine's schools routinely score highly in national rankings of educational outcomes and Maine people have a long history of strong support for their local schools.

However, a new age is upon us. Where our schools once needed to prepare young people for work in a predominantly natural resource-based economy of forestry, farming and fishing, they must now prepare students for a global economy in which many of the jobs of Maine's past have become automated or moved offshore. Maine's young people need an entirely new set of skills to succeed in an information-age economy where ideas and innovation move at the speed of light. These new skills are not just related to advances in technology, they are a product of the way society and business work and think: flatter organizations that require more independent thinking and problem-solving; collaboration with people and teams across the aisle and in offices around the globe; and more advanced critical thinking, even in jobs that once were considered manual labor and did not even require a high school degree.

This new age poses a series of challenges that will require us to not simply reform our schools, but to re-imagine them; to build on the successes of the past while creating a model of schooling for this new age.

### **Challenge 1: Our schools aren't accomplishing what they need to accomplish**

The first challenge we confront is that when one measures the success of our schools using the traditional indicators—test scores, graduation rates, and so forth—Maine may well exceed the national averages, but forward progress is slow. Test scores are essentially flat, and graduation rates, while up slightly, are gaining too slowly.

The most recent set of results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, for example, conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics at the United States Department of Education, show that the percentage of fourth graders in Maine scoring proficient or better in reading is lower today than it was 20 years ago. Reading proficiency levels for the state's eighth graders have dropped as well. In math, proficiency levels are trending up, but even today, only 45 percent of Maine's fourth graders are proficient or better in math, a rate that drops to just 39 percent by eighth grade.

Maine's high school graduation rate has edged up slightly in recent years, but remains unacceptably low. Too many of Maine's young people fail to complete high school, and too many who do complete high school do not have the knowledge and skills they need to move onto college and careers. The state's higher education institutions report that a shockingly high percentage of incoming students require remedial coursework. The Maine Community College System, for instance, reports that a majority of the students it enrolls right out of high school—51 percent—require some kind of additional academic support. They simply are not prepared to do college-level work.

Employers also express concern that recent high school graduates lack many of the skills the modern workforce requires. Employers interviewed by author Tony Wagner for his book *The Global Achievement Gap* report that students graduating from the nation's high schools struggle with complex and critical thinking, labor to communicate

effectively and work productively in teams, and often lack the capacity to think in the kinds of creative and innovative ways the information-age economy requires.

Our schools, Wagner argues, are not failing. They are simply obsolete: They were built for a bygone era, and the world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires something new.

## **Challenge 2: Recent efforts to improve schools have come up short**

The second challenge facing us is that the steps we have taken to address the problems of our struggling schools have not only failed to make our schools more effective, they have largely made things worse.

In an attempt to turn our schools around, for instance, policymakers instituted high-stakes testing. Today, we grade the effectiveness of schools based on how well students do on standardized tests in two content areas: math and English language arts. We test this year's fourth graders, compare how that group performed relative to last year's fourth graders, then make all sorts of determinations about the effectiveness of schools and teachers based on two sets of scores from two different groups of students in two subject areas.

Our schools have responded to this new reality predictably, and logically, given the expectations: By focusing their efforts on and directing their resources to those academic subjects that are tested, often at the expense of other content areas. During tough financial times especially, schools and districts have freed up resources to invest in tested subjects by cutting programs and course offerings in other areas, such as art and industrial arts, music and foreign languages.

The result is a significant student engagement problem. A 2009 Indiana University study found that 67 percent of students report being bored in school *every day*. When asked why they find school boring, the vast majority of students surveyed—82 percent—report a lack of interest in the material being taught. Nearly half report that they do not see how the material is relevant to them.

These recent accountability efforts have had an adverse effect on educators as well. The nation's teachers feel besieged. The public school structure is demanding something from them that's been asked of no previous generation of educators: They're expected to assure that every student in their care reaches the same high level of academic achievement at the same time, regardless of prior learning or life experiences. Their effectiveness at this daunting task is determined to a large degree by scores on standardized tests.

According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, more than 30 percent of beginning teachers leave the profession within five years, and that rate is climbing. The Commission calculates that this "teacher dropout" crisis costs the nation billions of dollars each year.

In short, recent efforts to improve schools through test-based accountability efforts have largely failed. The intense work undertaken to raise test scores in math and language arts has had little discernable impact on those test scores, and worse still, these efforts are driving educators from the profession and have resulted in a narrowing of school curricula at a time when the job creators of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are calling for more emphasis on creative and innovative thinking and skills.

### **Challenge 3: Our traditional school design is standing in the way of success**

That standardized testing and the accompanying accountability provisions of laws like the No Child Left Behind Act have failed to transform our schools to any significant degree, despite the best efforts of the educators working in them, suggests that the challenge we face is more fundamental in nature.

It suggests a design problem. The basic architecture of our system of schooling was established, after all, more than a century ago, for an industrial age that has all but vanished.

In fact, one of the most significant developments impacting the design of public schools was the 1892 report of a group known as the Committee of Ten. This high-profile committee of educators, chaired by the president of Harvard University, released a report in that year that outlined the basic design of our public schools today.

The committee suggested that eight years of elementary school be followed by four years of high school. They recommended that in math, arithmetic should be taught from ages 6 to 13, pre-algebra should be addressed at about seventh grade, and algebra should begin at age 14, followed by geometry. The three-year secondary school science curriculum, they suggested, should begin with biology and earth science, move next to chemistry, and then onto physics.

All of this would seem familiar to a student of today.

The committee's report also declared "every subject which is taught at all ...should be taught in the same way and to the same extent to every pupil." It likewise determined that each subject should be granted "equal time allotment" regardless of how much time a student needed to learn it. This was done, the committee wrote, to preserve the "dignity" of each academic subject. For the Committee of Ten, it was the subject matter to which teachers were to pay homage, not the individual learning needs of their students.

After all, this committee was trying to build a system of schools to meet a set of needs that today is outdated. In that era, it was thought that only an "insignificant percentage" of high school graduates would go on to college. As a result, the ideal school system should "be made for those children whose education is not to be pursued beyond the secondary school."

This approach may well have served the nation's interests a century ago, but the global economy of the 21st century, not to mention the well-being of students and future families, requires far more.

The challenge to be confronted, then, is to build a system that prepares every student for some type of post-secondary education and the high-skill careers of today and the future. To do that, we have to address the core design elements of the system we have – the age-based grade levels, the Carnegie units and seat time, the factory-style bell schedules. We have to address the basic architecture of the industrial-era model of schooling built more than a century ago.

### **Challenge 4: Change must be achieved within existing resources**

As if transforming a century-old model of schooling were not challenging enough, it is clear that we must do so without additional financial resources. Whatever work we do to make our schools better must be done by investing the education dollars we have in new ways.

For years, the nation's public schools enjoyed steady and significant increases in funding year after year. Over the

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past 40 years, inflation-adjusted spending on public education nationally has essentially tripled. Ongoing spending increases of this kind, though, are a thing of the past. The \$914 million the state has budgeted for General Purpose Aid to Maine's schools for the 2012-13 school year brings the level of state funding to approximately where it was during the 2006-07 school year. Add to that the loss of various forms of federal funding, and Maine's schools will receive less state and federal funding in 2012-13 than they received in 2011-12.

There is little reason to think that this reality will change anytime soon. The federal government is struggling with massive spending issues, and Maine state government is confronting a shortfall for the current biennial budget that totals more than \$200 million. At the local level, Maine's towns and cities struggle with constant budget pressures as well, and will almost certainly continue for the foreseeable future.

That means waiting for the financial outlook to brighten before taking action is not an option. We – the state Department of Education and Maine's schools and districts – must maximize the use of available resources.

## **A way forward through a relentless focus on our core priorities**

Moving from a century-old model of schooling to a more effective, learner-centered approach will require a steady focus on a handful of core priorities organized around meeting the individual learning needs of all students.

The plan that follows is arranged into five core priority areas that are organized from the learner out, as the accompanying graphic on page 2 illustrates.

- Closest to the learners are the **instructional practices** that take place in the classroom. This core priority area concerns the standards and curricula, classroom practices and instructional techniques, assessment of student learning and the use of data to inform decision-making.
- Effective instructional practices can't be applied without **effective teachers and school leaders**, the second core priority area. Ensuring that every student is surrounded by great educators means focusing on the need to provide top-quality preparation and ongoing support to the state's teachers and leaders.
- Building a system of schooling that meets the needs of all students will require building an educational system with unprecedented flexibility and multiple avenues for student success. Creating **multiple pathways for student achievement** must be a central focus of our efforts.
- For learners to be successful, a **comprehensive network of school and community supports** is critical. We must ensure that learners have access to the services they need to be successful and that families and the broader community outside the school walls are engaged as partners in teaching and learning.
- Every effort must also be made to **carefully align the entire educational system** so that learners can move seamlessly from one educational opportunity to the next. Technology must be integrated seamlessly and system-wide, and we must put a new accountability structure into place.

In the plan that follows, each of these core priority areas is further divided into subcategories, with specific goals, objectives and action steps developed for each. The result is a broad set of specific, measureable steps that will move Maine to a new model of schooling. Such a move won't take place through the imposition of heavy-handed mandates or one-size-fits-all approaches from Augusta, but by building on the innovative work being done in schools across Maine already and by employing strategies to increase collaboration and sharing of best practices.

Indeed, we are fortunate in Maine to have a number of schools and districts that have taken promising steps toward making the five core priority areas central to all that they do. We are beginning to see the profound, positive impact this laser-like focus on core priorities can have on individual students. Students in these early-adopting schools and districts are taking an active role in directing their own education.

Their education is taking place in classrooms intentionally designed to foster student engagement and empowerment. Their learning is facilitated by teachers trained in practices that make expectations transparent. The learning opportunities they are provided meet them where they are and support, encourage, and challenge them.

Making learning experiences like this available to every student in Maine should be our goal. In an era of fiscal challenges, the only way to make that goal a reality is to focus, at both the state and local level, on those core practices that have the greatest impact on student success.

That is the intent of the plan that follows.

## **The Core Priorities**

Using feedback from Maine’s educators, parents, students, policymakers and Department of Education staff, along with current research and a review of promising practices being used in Maine’s schools today, the plan described in the pages that follow has been organized into the following core priority areas and subcategories, with goals, objectives and action steps for each.

### **Effective, Learner-Centered Instruction**

1. Rigorous standards and aligned curricula
2. Learner-centered instructional practices
3. Assessment systems that provide timely, accurate data on achievement and growth
4. Information systems that track learner growth over time

### **Great Teachers and Leaders**

1. Common standards for teacher and leader effectiveness
2. Initial preparation and professional development programs that are rigorous, relevant, and data driven
3. Next-generation evaluation systems for teachers and leaders
4. Communities of practice designed to foster continuous improvement

### **Multiple Pathways for Learner Achievement**

1. Advancement based on demonstration of mastery
2. Student voice and choice in the demonstration of learning
3. Expanded learning options
4. “Anytime, anywhere” learning

### **Comprehensive School and Community Supports**

1. Effective and efficient services for learners with special needs
2. Coordinated health and wellness programs
3. A commitment to community and family engagement
4. Career and workforce partnerships

### **Coordinated and Effective State Support**

1. Seamless integration of educational programs from early childhood into adulthood
2. Adequate and equitable state resources for Maine’s schools
3. Comprehensive integration of technology
4. A robust and transparent accountability and improvement system

## **Core Priority Area 1: Effective, Learner-Centered Instruction**

The core of the entire educational enterprise is the teaching and learning that happens in classrooms every day. All of the institutional elements that comprise our system of education—the buildings and busses, the administrative structures at the local, state and federal levels, the schools of education—are in place to support what researchers David Tyack and Larry Cuban call the “core” of schooling, those “daily interactions of teachers and students” where learning takes place.

Unfortunately, school reform proposals seldom focus on the specific instructional practices used on a daily basis by teachers in the classroom. In his 2000 white paper *Building a New Structure for School Leadership*, Harvard’s Richard Elmore describes the “sociology” of schools as being one of “loose-coupling.” While “relatively elaborate systems of administrative overhead at the school and district level” are thought necessary for the “adequate supervision” of classroom teachers, Elmore writes, the “technical core” of teaching—“the detailed decisions about what should be taught at any given time, how it should be taught, what students should be expected to learn at any given time, how they should be grouped within classrooms for the purposes of instruction, what they should be required to do to demonstrate their knowledge, and perhaps most importantly, how the learning should be evaluated”—is largely left to individual teachers themselves. In short, while school boards and school administrators manage the larger system, “teachers, working in isolated classrooms, under highly uncertain conditions, manage the technical core” of teaching and learning.

The result, Elmore argues, is that most of the innovation and improvement that does occur in schools tends to take place in “the structures that surround teaching and learning,” rather than directly impacting “the conditions of teaching and learning for actual teachers and students.” As a consequence, “manifestly successful instructional practices that grow out of research or exemplary practice never take root in more than a small proportion of classrooms and schools.”

This perhaps explains why, despite the determined effort of educators across Maine and the nation, the focus in recent years on improving student achievement in the tested subjects has had little discernable effect in terms of improving student outcomes. Meeting the learning needs of all students will require an unprecedented focus on the broad dissemination of those core instructional practices that result in effective teaching and learning.

This focus, in turn, requires a concentration on four elements that are key to effective instruction:

- Rigorous standards and aligned curriculum – *what students are taught*
- Learner-centered instructional practice – *how students are taught*
- Assessment systems that provide timely, accurate data on achievement and growth – *how student learning is measured*
- Information systems that track learner growth over time – *how instructional practices are adjusted based on assessment data*

In the pages that follow, each of these four elements is explored further, with goals, objectives, and action steps outlined for each.

## **Effective, Learner-Centered Instruction**

### **1. Rigorous standards and aligned curricula**

The research is clear that high-performing education systems are built around rigorous standards for both content and performance. Maine's *Learning Results* standards, first adopted in 1997, include content standards in eight areas, framed by an overarching set of Guiding Principles that describe the knowledge and skills believed necessary to prepare every student for college, careers and civic life. With the adoption of the Common Core State Standards in 2011, Maine joined 45 other states in embracing internationally benchmarked standards for learning in Math and English Language Arts. Maine is also set to take the lead in the development of next-generation science standards, and continues to participate in national efforts to develop and revise standards in all other content areas.

Rigorous learning standards are meaningless, however, unless they inform instructional practice at the classroom level. As Maine transitions to the Common Core State Standards, it is more important than ever that curricula and materials aligned with the state's learning standards are made available to educators across Maine.

**Goal:** A variety of instructional materials aligned with the Maine *Learning Results* standards, which include the Common Core State Standards, are readily available to and support the instructional practices of Maine educators.

**Objective:** Fully implement the Common Core State Standards; provide Maine's educators with access to a resource directory of curricula and resources for every content area and level of achievement aligned with the appropriate set of standards.

#### **Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Planning and Implementation	Develop a detailed plan for the implementation of the Common Core State Standards, which includes targeted training and outreach efforts as well as expanded use of the Maine DOE's website as a resource for standards implementation.	Maine DOE's Common Core implementation team	May 1, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Establish a state-level, online "Communities of Practice" collaboration platform for developing and vetting standards-aligned curricula and instructional materials, in collaboration with the state's teachers and curriculum coordinators. The venue should allow for the posting and cataloging of standards-aligned curriculum guides, lesson plans, instructional materials and assessment tools.	Maine DOE communications team in cooperation with the state's educators	"Soft" launch by March 1, 2012.
Regionalization	Develop and support regional centers to coordinate implementation of standards and aligned curricula.	Development supported by Maine DOE through the Fund for Efficient Delivery of Education Services	Upon budget approval, state funding available beginning July 1, 2012

## **Effective, Learner-Centered Instruction**

### **2. Learner-centered instructional practices**

No matter how well curricula and materials are aligned to learning standards, if instructional practices in the classroom fail to engage learners, those learners will still struggle to achieve. There are educators in classrooms across Maine who are pioneering instructional approaches that make learners active participants in and directors of their own learning. In such settings, learners have a meaningful role in planning learning activities and are allowed to choose the manner by which they demonstrate proficiency. Teachers provide learning opportunities and support the customized needs of each child.

Taking such practices to scale will require a renewed focus on teacher training and support, as well as a significant effort to make materials related to learner-centered instruction available to educators statewide. As Maine already has a cohort of school and district leaders pioneering this work, the Department's role should be to support the ongoing work, and to make the lessons learned by these pioneering schools and districts more widely available.

**Goal:** Learner-centered instructional strategies are in place in all Maine classrooms.

**Objective:** Provide state support for existing district-level work in learner-centered instruction, and make materials and resources available to all Maine educators to support the proliferation of learner-centered instructional practices.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
DOE Initiative	Appoint a learner-centered instruction team to continue state support for districts already engaged in the development of learner-centered instructional practices and aid districts new to employing such practices.	Maine DOE's leadership team	Team in place by March 1, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Develop a state-level "Center for Best Practices," with a focus on learner-centered instruction, to serve as a clearinghouse of materials, support and case studies related to learner-centered instructional practices.	Maine DOE's learner-centered instruction and communications teams	Center launched January 1, 2012
Best Practices	Publish learner-centered materials developed by the Center for Best Practices to the Maine DOE website.	Center for Best Practices, communications team	Website with preliminary Center materials launched by February 15, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Collaborate with Maine teacher preparation programs to expand access to educator training and support related to learner-centered instruction.	Maine DOE learner-centered instruction team, the state's teacher preparation programs	Ongoing

## **Effective, Learner-Centered Instruction**

### **3. Assessment systems that provide educators with timely, accurate information on learner achievement and growth**

Accurately measuring the individual instructional needs of learners requires a thorough analysis of timely assessment data. Today, learners are assessed using a combination of state and local assessment instruments and a mix of teacher-developed classroom assessments. What is required is a set of modern assessment tools to provide teachers and administrators at both the Pre-K and K-12 levels the accurate data needed to make appropriate decisions regarding instructional practice. New assessment tools must assess higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills, not simply rote memorization.

Maine is one of the states leading the development of the SMARTER Balanced assessment system, which will ultimately not only replace the state standardized tests in place today, but also provide educators with formative assessment tools designed to inform instructional practice throughout the school year. Implementation of the SMARTER Balanced assessment system, as well as assessment systems for those subject areas not included in SMARTER Balanced, will require a significant statewide training and support effort.

Additionally, expanding access to high-quality, teacher-developed assessment tools could be greatly enhanced by the development of a statewide resource directory of such assessment tools, organized and indexed to the *Learning Results* and Common Core, and accompanied by associated lesson plans and learning materials.

**Goal: All of Maine educators have access to modern, 21<sup>st</sup>-century assessment systems and use assessment information to inform instruction.**

**Objective: Successfully transition to the SMARTER Balanced assessment system, and develop a state-level resource directory of teacher-developed assessment instruments aligned with the state's *Learning Results*, which include the Common Core State Standards.**

#### **Action Steps:**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Deadline:</b>
Planning and Implementation	Develop a comprehensive plan for the statewide implementation of the SMARTER Balanced assessment system.	Maine DOE assessment team, in collaboration with educators and stakeholders	Implementation plan due September 1, 2012
Communication and Collaboration	Use online Communities of Practice to support the development of a resource directory of teacher-developed assessment tools, including rubrics and examples of student work, organized and aligned with the state's academic standards.	Maine DOE learner-centered instruction and communications teams, in cooperation with state's educators	Assessment practice group in place by July 1, 2012
Regionalization	Create regional teacher development centers to coordinate regional training and support in the use of the SMARTER Balanced assessment instruments.	Development supported through Fund for Efficient Delivery of Education Services	Upon budget approval, state funding available beginning July 1, 2012

## **Effective, Learner-Centered Instruction**

### **4. Information systems that track learner growth over time**

Students are assessed repeatedly throughout their academic careers, yet tracking student growth over time is complicated by the lack of a single data system into which assessment data from various state and district sources can be entered. Maine is in the process, however, of developing a Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), which will be able to track individual student achievement over time, from Pre-K to higher education and the workforce. This will provide educators with invaluable data on student growth, and allow policymakers to measure the effectiveness of the various educational initiatives and programs a learner encounters throughout his or her educational career.

Once the system is in place, a significant effort must be made to ensure that teachers and school leaders know how to make the best use of the data the system provides. Efforts to train educators are already underway and must be expanded as the full deployment of the system draws nearer and more focus is placed on the use of data to inform instructional practices.

Ongoing support for this data system, which was developed with one-time federal grants, must be secured. The state should immediately begin work on a sustainability plan that identifies the ongoing costs to maintain and update the SLDS and makes recommendations for funding and support.

**Goal: Maine's educators have ready access to helpful data and regularly use it to tailor instruction and improve student outcomes.**

**Objective: Complete the deployment of the State Longitudinal Data System, expand data system training opportunities for educators statewide, and develop a sustainability plan for the system moving forward.**

#### **Action Steps:**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Deadline:</b>
Planning and Implementation	Develop a comprehensive SLDS implementation plan, which outlines the full deployment of the system and related training and support initiatives.	Maine DOE's SLDS development and communications teams, stakeholders	Plan due July 1, 2012
Regionalization	Develop and provide support for regional centers to coordinate implementation of SLDS training initiatives, with a specific focus on the use of SLDS and other data to inform instructional practices.	Development supported through Fund for Efficient Delivery of Education Services	Upon budget approval, state funding available beginning July 1, 2012
Planning and Implementation	Develop SLDS sustainability plan that calculates ongoing system costs, identifies potential sources for funding and support.	SLDS development team	Plan due September 1, 2012

## **Core Priority Area 2: Great Teachers and Leaders**

Systemic changes to standards, curricula, instructional practices and assessment will achieve little if efforts are not made to ensure that every learner has access to highly effective teachers and school leaders.

Research from around the globe makes clear that educator effectiveness has a profound effect on achievement. Indeed, the findings suggest that no other school-based factor is more important to learner outcomes than the effectiveness of teachers and school leaders. In a recent report, the Washington-based Center for American Progress found that “effective teachers are critical to raising achievement and closing longstanding gaps among student subgroups. Indeed, the research on this point has become absolutely clear: Students who have three or four strong teachers in a row will soar academically, regardless of their racial or economic background, while those who have a sequence of weak teachers will fall further and further behind.” The impact of effective school leaders is just as profound.

As a consequence of these findings, teacher and leader effectiveness have become a central focus of federal education policy in recent years. At the center of the Obama administration’s Race to the Top initiative was a significant emphasis on policy related to teacher and leader effectiveness. States wishing to take advantage of the flexibility the administration is now offering around some key aspects of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act will be required to develop detailed guidelines related to teacher and leader evaluation and require that local districts adopt evaluation systems consistent with state guidelines.

Improving teacher and leader effectiveness will require the development of a comprehensive system of training and support that begins with rigorous preparation programs and follows teachers and leaders throughout their careers.

Within this core priority area are four subcategories related to different aspects of teacher and leader effectiveness:

- Common standards for teacher and leader effectiveness
- Initial preparation and professional development programs that are rigorous, relevant, and data driven
- Next generation evaluation systems for teachers and leaders
- Communities of practice designed to foster continuous improvement

### **Great Teachers and Leaders**

#### **1. Common standards for teacher and leader effectiveness**

Advancing the cause of teacher and leader effectiveness means first defining what effective teaching and school leadership looks like. Through our *Learning Results*, Maine set standards for what its students should know and be able to do. It has not, however, established in law what its teachers and school leaders should know and be able to do.

Fortunately, educators across the nation have done a significant amount of work in this area, and several Maine school districts are piloting efforts to define performance expectations for their educators. In 2011, the Council of Chief State School Officers released an updated version of the core teaching standards adopted by the Interstate

Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC). This effort comes on the heels of the release, in 2008, of an updated version of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium standards for school leaders (ISLLC). Other national organizations, such as the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, have developed and released standards of their own.

Maine should take advantage of these efforts and join the community of states that have adopted clear standards for teacher and school leader effectiveness. Next, efforts should be undertaken to use these standards as the basis for aligning the state's policies regarding approval of teacher preparation programs, teacher and leader certification and recertification, the employment of educational personnel and their evaluation, mentoring, and ongoing professional development. This work should be done in close collaboration with stakeholder groups, especially those representing teachers and school leaders.

**Goal:** Educator preparation, training and evaluation are informed by a common understanding of effective teaching and leadership.

**Objective:** Adopt state standards for teacher and leader effectiveness and align state statute and rules accordingly.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Policy	Develop state standards for teacher and leader effectiveness for adoption by the Maine Legislature.	Maine DOE, in collaboration with stakeholders	By completion of 2012 legislative session
Policy	Establish plan to update related rule chapters in order to ensure that effectiveness standards are fully implemented in rule and policy. Goal to have all rules and policy updated within five years.	Maine DOE, State Board of Education, stakeholders	Implementation plan due September 1, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Develop plan to publicize effectiveness standards; feature examples of effective teaching and school leadership in online Communities of Practice.	Maine DOE communications team to develop publicity plan	Plan due September 1, 2012

## **Great Teachers and Leaders**

### **2. Initial preparation and ongoing professional development programs that are rigorous, relevant, and data-driven**

Today, the availability and effectiveness of both initial preparation and professional development programs for teachers and leaders vary dramatically. The goal should be to have high-quality initial preparation programs that are research-driven and classroom-based, as well as ongoing professional development opportunities for in-service educators that are rigorous, relevant, and directed, as nearly as possible, by real-time data on the needs of both learners and educators. Training opportunities should take place, as often as is practical, in the schools where educators do their work. Effective preparation and ongoing training for Maine's early childhood educators are especially critical needs.

Providing leadership training and development has been a challenge as well. While preparation programs for school leaders tend to focus on administration and management, a more pressing need in an era of real change is training

and support related to leadership in executing transformations. Moving from a century-old model of schooling to a proficiency-based, learner-centered model of education will require fundamental change, and such change will require training in change leadership.

Making high-quality training and support for teachers and leaders more readily available will almost certainly require building some regional capacity to deliver it. The state should pursue the creation of regional teacher development centers as a means of maximizing training and professional development resources, while still connecting such opportunities to the specific instructional needs of local teachers and school leaders.

**Goal:** Maine educators are consistently supported through high-quality training and professional development.

**Objective:** Expand access to high-quality initial and ongoing training and professional development for teachers and school leaders, with a specific emphasis on transformation leadership and on effectively and efficiently meeting the training and support needs of all educators.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Policy	Amend the Chapter 114 rules governing state approval of teacher preparation programs, with the goal of improving the rigor and relevance of such programs.	Chapter 114 stakeholder group, Maine DOE, State Board of Education	By completion of 2012 legislative session
Regionalization	Develop and provide support for regional teacher development centers to coordinate and conduct regional professional development opportunities for teachers and school leaders.	Development supported through Fund for Efficient Delivery of Education Services	Upon budget approval, state funding available beginning July 1, 2012
DOE Initiative	Develop an annual state-level “leadership academy” for school and district leaders, with a specific focus on change leadership.	Maine DOE, in collaboration with stakeholders, business leaders	Initial leadership academy to take place summer, 2012

## **Great Teachers and Leaders**

### **3. Next-generation evaluation systems for teachers and leaders**

In its landmark 2009 study of educator evaluation systems, *The Widget Effect*, The New Teacher Project concluded that current educator evaluation systems “fail to differentiate performance among teachers,” with the result that “a teacher’s effectiveness—the most important factor for schools in improving student achievement—is not measured, recorded, or used to inform decision-making in any meaningful way.” The same could be said for the evaluation of school and district leaders.

Effective teaching and school leadership require meaningful evaluation of teachers and school leaders. This in turn requires high-quality evaluation systems, administered by trained evaluators, that are fair and that provide clear and constructive feedback, which is then used to improve professional practice. Consistent with the principles outlined in

the U.S. Department of Education’s ESEA waiver framework, the State should adopt a common set of standards that informs the development, at the district level, of teacher and leader evaluation systems.

The state should also work with districts to develop regional teacher development centers that not only support the training of the evaluators themselves, but make use of evaluation data to design and implement targeted professional development.

**Goal:** Highly effective educator evaluation systems are in place in every Maine school district.

**Objective:** Adopt statewide guidelines for locally developed teacher and leader evaluation systems, and support the development of a network of trained evaluators based in regional teacher development centers.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Policy	Adopt statewide standards for teacher and leader evaluation systems, consistent with ESEA flexibility guidance from USDOE.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders, Maine Legislature	By completion of 2012 legislative session
Collaboration and Communication	Develop teacher and principal evaluation models consistent with adopted state standards and post to Maine DOE website.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders	Evaluation models posted to web by July 1, 2012
Regionalization	Develop and provide support for regional teacher development centers to coordinate and conduct training of teacher and leader evaluators, and to design and implement training and professional development activities.	Development supported through Fund for Efficient Delivery of Education Services	Upon budget approval, state funding available beginning July 1, 2012

## **Great Teachers and Leaders**

### **4. Communities of practice designed to foster continuous improvement**

As Harvard’s Tony Wagner argues in his book *The Global Achievement Gap*, teaching has been and continues to be a largely solitary practice providing few opportunities for collaboration and sharing of best practices. With the advent of the Internet, the sharing of new ideas and new approaches to teaching can be far more readily facilitated. Instructional materials, research on best practices, and even videos of effective instructional methods can be shared instantly across the state and around the world. Today, though, no single statewide library of such materials exists. At the same time, large volumes of materials are available, but the absence of “curation,” context and discussion make it extremely challenging to professionals seeking the right resource.

The Department is already at work developing an online “Communities of Practice” collaboration platform that will allow the state’s educators to post instructional resources of various kinds, indexed to the state’s *Learning Results*, and available anytime, day or night. The online collaboration platform will allow visitors to browse the work of various practice groups, participate in conversations about the materials and educational practice challenges, and join practice groups where they can more actively participate in ongoing development of education solutions. The

platform could facilitate the development of a resource directory of best practices and become home to a collection of webinars and videos on effective instructional practices, while also connecting educators to like sites and resources centers in other states and around the globe. While in development at the moment, an early version of the site should be developed and deployed soon. Growing the platform to allow an unlimited number of self-formed and managed practice groups is the goal of this effort.

Additionally, the state should pursue development of “lab schools” that can be centers both for research on best practices and for the sharing of effective instructional practices with visiting educators.

**Goal:** Maine’s educators participate easily and often in statewide sharing of instructional best practices and professional development opportunities.

**Objective:** Develop a state-level, online resource center devoted to the sharing of effective educational practices and professional development resources. Form a network of regional lab schools that develop, implement and promote effective practices.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Collaboration and Communication	Use the online Communities of Practice to facilitate the development of a resource directory for instructional resources and professional development materials.	Maine DOE communications team, in cooperation with the state’s educators	Initial launch of resource directory by April 1, 2012
Best Practices	Develop a “Lab School” designation for schools undertaking research and development on effective instructional practices.	Maine DOE, in collaboration with stakeholders	Implementation plan to be developed by September, 2012

### **Core Priority Area 3: Multiple Pathways for Learner Achievement**

For generations, the adults in our schools have decided what students learn; when, where, and how they learn it; and in what ways they demonstrate what they have learned. It is becoming increasingly clear, however, that this approach—in which the learner is obligated to adapt to the educational institution instead of the other way around—simply does not work for many kids. For too long, such a model has prevented too many students from finding success in the school environment.

The system of schools we have today is one in which time is the constant and learning is the variable. Teachers and students are given a fixed period of time in which to cover a fixed curriculum. The result is a model that falls short of meeting the needs of all students. Some students disengage because the pace of the class does not challenge them, while others fail to achieve learning goals because the pace is too fast. As Nicholas Colangelo, Susan Assouline and Miraca Gross write in their 2004 report, *A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students*, our system of education keeps the most advanced students from reaching their full potential “by forcing them to learn in a lock-step manner with their classmates.” “The evidence,” the authors write, “indicates that when children’s academic and social needs are not met, the result is boredom and disengagement from school.”

Along with being grouped with students of the same age, students are expected to learn in the same physical setting as all other students in their community: in a brick and mortar elementary school, middle school, and high school within defined geographical boundaries. Within the physical structure, learning in one content area is often completely separate from learning in another: Math is learned in math class and civics in civics class. Credit is earned by sitting in certain classes for certain periods of time.

In a learner-centered, proficiency-based system, students advance upon demonstration of mastery, rather than remain locked in an age-based cohort that progresses through a fixed curriculum at a fixed pace, regardless of learning achievement.

The good news is that schools and districts across Maine and the nation are already implementing a learner-centered instructional approach, one that provides learners with more say in their education, more choices about how, where and when they learn, and more opportunities for them to demonstrate success anytime, anywhere. The work of these educational pioneers, who are providing customized experiences for each student, should be studied. Best practices in learner-centered, proficiency-based instruction should be developed, shared, discussed, and constantly improved.

Additional steps must be taken to provide learners with every opportunity to succeed. Learners must be partners in and directors of their own learning. They must help to design learning activities and have some say in how that learning will be evaluated. For example, schools across Maine already make use of “capstone projects”—interdisciplinary, theme-based assessment instruments designed, at least in part, by the students themselves.

As we move away from the factory-era, assembly line model of schooling, we must also begin moving away from the practice of having the student’s street address serve as the primary determinant of the school that student attends. Expanding school choice options, such as charter schools, meets this goal. Moreover, we need to move away from a model where the only place that learning is recognized as having happened is in school. More than any previous generation, this generation of young people will be one of lifelong learners, acquiring new skills and processing new information as a routine part of life. The technological age in which we now live will provide this generation of

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Embargoed Copy, January 2012

learners with access to a variety of learning options and opportunities that is without precedent in human history. Already, through the Internet, students have access to an enormous variety of learning options, including online courses delivered at little or no cost from all over the world. The idea that the learning that takes place outside the walls of the school somehow doesn't "count" is yet another idea whose time has come and gone.

Truly embracing a "learning without barriers" model will mean more flexibility within the walls of the school and more opportunities for learning outside the walls. It will require a new architecture for learning, one that involves new ways of organizing students for instruction, new ways to assess student learning, and new learning opportunities both within the existing structure of schools and beyond it.

A system that fully recognizes multiple pathways for a student to achieve will embrace the following four tenets:

- Advancement based on demonstration of mastery
- Student voice and choice in the demonstration of learning
- Expanded learning options
- "Anytime, anywhere" learning

## **Multiple Pathways for Learner Achievement**

### **1. Advancement based on demonstration of mastery**

For as long as anyone can remember, learners have been organized into groups by age. They move through school in age-based cohorts in lockstep, whether they fully understand what is taught or not. As a consequence, students who have already mastered certain content must wait for the others to catch up, while those who have yet to fully understand a certain concept are pushed to move on anyway. What is needed is a move to a learner-centered, proficiency-based system in which learners advance only when they have demonstrated mastery of defined learning outcomes.

Transitioning from the age-based grade level model, which has been in place for more than a century, to something new will take a sustained effort over a number of years. Luckily, there are already schools and school districts here in Maine moving forward with proficiency-based systems. The state should take an active role in supporting these efforts, undertaking research on this new approach and reporting outcomes. The Department's new Center for Best Practices, supported by grant funds, should study and report on the work of Maine districts implementing a proficiency-based model. Through the online Communities of Practice collaboration platform, to be developed by the Department in 2012, materials and resources related to proficiency-based models can be shared. The platform can also provide a platform for professional discussion and development connected to those materials.

Since the adoption of the Maine *Learning Results* standards back in 1997, the Maine Legislature has envisioned a true, proficiency-based system, including a standards-based high school diploma. If Maine is serious about moving in this direction, legislation will need to be adopted that moves the state away from age-based grade levels and Carnegie units as a measure of academic progress at the high school level. Statutory language should be adopted embracing a true standards-based high school diploma.

**Goal: All Maine students learn in a proficiency-based model that allows them to move at their own pace and advance when they have mastered learning outcomes.**

**Objective:** Develop and implement a comprehensive set of state policies and supports to aid schools and school districts as they move from an age-based model to a proficiency-based model of schooling.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Best Practices	Establish a Center for Best Practices at the Maine DOE to focus on research and reporting related to proficiency-based systems here in Maine.	Maine DOE	Center launched January 1, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Use the online Communities of Practice to share resources and best practices related to proficiency-based learning.	Maine DOE, districts piloting proficiency-based learning	Online practice group on proficiency-based learning in place by May 1, 2012
Planning and Implementation	Establish a learner-centered instruction team at the Maine DOE, tasked with coordinating support for proficiency-based districts and establishing a communications strategy related to proficiency-based systems.	Maine DOE	Team in place by March 1, 2012, communications plan adopted by June 1, 2012
Policy	Adopt statutory language requiring proficiency-based high school diplomas by a date certain.	Maine DOE, Maine Legislature	By completion of 2012 legislative session

## **Multiple Pathways for Learner Achievement**

### **2. Student voice and choice in the demonstration of learning**

A truly learner-centered model of schooling allows for advancement based on demonstration of mastery. It also makes the learner a partner in determining not just the learning activities to be undertaken but the means by which that learning is to be demonstrated.

In schools across Maine and the nation, some variation of this model already exists. In high schools, especially, students are often asked to design culminating experiences such as senior theses or capstone projects. Such projects are generally conducted in collaboration with faculty advisers, are often interdisciplinary in nature, and are typically shared or presented in a public forum. The intent of such projects is not only to demonstrate the application of student learning, but to mirror the kind of work typically found in the world beyond high school, where one applies skills and knowledge from a variety of content areas to create a new product or new meaning.

To ensure that assessments of student learning are valid and reliable, efforts must be made to develop standards for learner-designed, performance-based assessments, and to provide both teachers and students with exemplars of such assessments, including examples of student work.

The state can play a role here, using the online Communities of Practice to develop a clearinghouse of such assessment tools. The ability to upload video clips and other materials to the platform will allow for the posting of exemplars of student work. The potential also exists for professional development opportunities to be made

available that allow teachers to score student-developed projects online, using a common rubric, and compare the score they give to the scores of others.

In pursuing this work, policymakers need to take care to avoid the mistakes of the “local assessment systems” initiative of the early 2000s, which, in an attempt to provide local control over student assessment, created an extraordinary amount of work for teachers and school leaders. Efforts should be made to take full advantage of modern technology to make available to educators a wide variety of learner-centered assessment approaches.

**Goal:** Learner-designed assessments are used in schools across Maine, making students active participants in setting and meeting expectations.

**Objective:** Provide Maine’s educators with access to exemplars of valid, student-developed assessment tools and expand professional development opportunities related to the implementation of such assessment systems.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Collaboration and Communication	Use Online Communities of Practice to share resources and best practices.	Maine DOE, districts piloting proficiency-based learning	Creation of relevant practice group by May 1, 2012

## **Multiple Pathways for Learner Achievement**

### **3. Expanded learning options**

Today, all public schools are required to provide students the opportunity to attend Career and Technical Education (CTE) and access its rigorous career preparation programming. Adult Education programming and the post-secondary options it offers are also prevalent throughout the state. School systems create additional educational options as well, in the form of alternative schools. In addition, thousands of Maine students can choose the schools they attend, and with the passage of recent legislation, Maine will soon allow the development of public charter schools, creating yet another educational option for learners.

While learning opportunities such as these may provide many students with a more appropriate educational setting, access is often limited. Every effort must be made to ensure that students can access a wide array of rigorous, proficiency-based educational programming, both within the resident school unit and outside of it.

And while schools today typically “count” only the learning that happens within school walls during the school day, a learner-centered educational system recognizes that learning takes place in many settings at all times of the day. More than any generation before it, this generation of young people will have access to countless learning opportunities, presented in a variety of settings. Schools are only beginning to move in this direction. They must work collaboratively with families, businesses, community organizations and others to accelerate this evolution and provide all students with rigorous, real-world learning opportunities.

**Goal:** A wide variety of learning opportunities and settings give all students access to educational options that work for them.

**Objective:** Establish in statute “multiple pathways” for student achievement that minimize barriers to available education options and ensure access to a broad array of learning options.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Policy	Adopt statutory language to expand student access to CTE and allow students to use Adult Education classes as a path to high school completion.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders, Maine Legislature	By completion of 2012 legislative session
Policy	Adopt statutory language expanding school choice options for all Maine students.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders, Maine Legislature	By completion of 2012 legislative session
Policy	Fully implement the state’s charter school law, including establishment of State Charter School Commission (SCSC), enactment of Maine DOE bill updating statutory language, final adoption of rules governing charter school development.	Maine DOE, State Charter School Commission, stakeholders	SCSC in place by January 1, 2012, updated statute and rules in place by completion of 2012 session

## **Multiple Pathways for Learner Achievement**

### **4. “Anytime, anywhere” learning**

While schools once had a near monopoly with regard to the provision of educational programs and services, technological advances provide students today with a far wider array of educational options.

Online and digital learning, for example, which allows students to learn at the time, place and pace most effective for them, is growing dramatically. The International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) reports that “in 2010, over 4 million K-12 students participated in a formal online learning program,” and that “online learning enrollments are growing by 46% a year.” That growth rate, reports iNACOL, “is accelerating.”

While Maine led the way a decade ago with a learning technology initiative that put laptop computers into the hands of tens of thousands of students, the state is falling behind when it comes to digital learning. States across the nation have launched online or virtual schools of one kind or another, and some have even mandated that students take at least one digital course as a condition of graduation. Maine needs a comprehensive digital learning strategy that ensures its students are prepared for the digital age in which they live.

Teachers and school leaders will also need additional knowledge and skills as digital learning becomes more popular and widespread. Efforts should be undertaken to ensure that teacher and leader preparation programs include training in digital learning, and the state’s learning technology team should continue its work to provide ongoing professional development opportunities related to digital learning.

As for Maine’s schools, if they are to remain relevant in this changing world, they must adopt an approach that recognizes digital learning options and must begin tailoring their own educational programming to allow for

“anytime, anywhere” learning. The state can assist in this effort by providing a clearinghouse of digital learning resources and by establishing and reporting on digital learning best practices.

**Goal:** All Maine learners actively participate in digital learning opportunities that engage them and allow self-directed, self-paced learning.

**Objective:** As part of a comprehensive digital learning strategy, develop approaches to assist districts in adopting policies and practices that support “anytime, anywhere” learning, including expanded access to digital learning and other educational options outside the classroom.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Planning and Implementation	In collaboration with stakeholders, adopt a comprehensive, multi-year digital learning strategic plan designed to expand access to digital learning opportunities for all Maine students.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders	Complete plan summer of 2012, with recommendations reported to the 126 <sup>th</sup> Maine legislature
Collaboration and Communication	Develop and post to Maine DOE website materials and resources related to digital learning best practices.	Maine DOE MLTI team	Ongoing

## **Core Priority Area 4: Comprehensive School and Community Supports**

Surrounding the teaching and learning that take place in classrooms and other educational settings is an extensive network of school and community supports that are critical for learner achievement. In even the most effective teaching and learning environments, learners will still struggle if they lack appropriate support for special learning needs, confront health and wellness issues, have limited access to learning opportunities beyond the school walls, or struggle to see how the work they do in school prepares them for college, careers and civic life. Highly effective school systems integrate these systems of support and interaction in order to ensure that effective teaching and learning can take place.

In many European nations, for instance, not only are health and other services for students more readily available, but fewer barriers exist between schools and the communities they serve. In many such systems, students complete learning outcomes while working in apprenticeships and internships with employers.

Within this core priority area are four subcategories related to providing needed services and supports to students:

- Effective and efficient services for learners with special needs
- Coordinated health and wellness programs
- A commitment to community and family engagement
- Career and workforce partnerships

### **Comprehensive School and Community Supports**

#### **1. Effective and efficient services for learners with special needs**

Students with special learning needs require adequate support in order to succeed. But school districts face a daunting challenge in providing those required services: They are under constant pressure to contain rising costs for special education at a time when the number of students with multiple and severe learning and behavioral issues is on the rise.

According to the Fordham Institute, Maine has one of the highest rates of special education identification in the country. At 17.25 percent, Maine's rate well exceeds the national average of 13.14 percent. In fact, only three other states—Rhode Island, Massachusetts and New York—identify a higher percentage of their students as in need of special education services. A sensible first step toward finding efficiencies might be to undertake a detailed study to examine Maine's high rate of special education identification.

Maine also seems to go about providing services to special education students in a very labor-intensive way. The Fordham Institute's report identifies Maine as having one of the nation's highest special education staff-to-student ratios. At 210 staff members for every 1,000 special education students, Maine has the sixth highest ratio in the country, well above the national average of 128 to 1,000. Some of that high staff ratio is almost certainly due to Maine's rural nature, but Fordham does report that there are much larger rural states with much lower personnel ratios. Additional study should be undertaken to determine the extent to which Maine is using cost-effective best practices in the provision of special education services.

Addressing the challenge of providing cost-effective special education services will almost certainly require building more regional capacities around special education administration and service provision. Much the same could be said of services for students with limited English proficiency.

**Goal:** All students with special learning needs have access to efficient, effective and appropriate services that help them succeed.

**Objective:** Review current practices with regard to the provision of services to students with special learning needs, and develop regional approaches to the delivery of special educational services, including the development of regional support centers for learners with special educational needs, their parents and families, and the educators who serve them.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Planning and Implementation	Review current special education policy and practices; recommend changes for the next legislative session. Review to include analysis of data regarding special education eligibility, placements, and staffing ratios to determine factors that influence determinations of eligibility and higher-than-average staffing.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders, Maine Legislature	Report due January 1, 2013
Best Practices	Publish a page on Maine DOE website to share evidence-based best practices with regard to special education services.	Maine DOE	September 1, 2012
Regionalization	Use the Fund for Efficient Delivery of Educational Services to pilot models of regional special education administration and services delivery.	Development supported through Fund for Efficient Delivery of Education Services	Upon budget approval, state funding available beginning July 1, 2012

## **Comprehensive School and Community Supports**

### **2. Coordinated health and wellness programs**

The health and wellness of all members of the school community have always been important factors influencing learner achievement and growth. Today, young learners often come to school with myriad physical, developmental, behavioral and emotional health issues. School personnel also are challenged with physical, personal and emotional issues of their own. Schools need to respond by working to coordinate access to a seamless array of health and wellness services for children, families and staff, developed in cooperation with health, counseling, wellness and nutrition resources outside the school walls.

Additionally, every effort must be made to ensure that schools and school districts have access to the latest information and resources on best practices in delivering health and wellness services.

In recent years, policy changes at the state level with regard to Maine's Medicaid program, MaineCare, have had an enormous impact on the capacity that schools have to provide needed health services. Still, today Maine's school districts and the wider health care community remain uncertain about current MaineCare policies and procedures. The state Department of Education and Department of Health and Human Services must partner in new ways to ensure that health care providers have access to clear policies and procedures around the use of MaineCare funding.

**Goal:** Coordinated health and wellness programs contribute to a healthy school environment that helps learners make the most out of school.

**Objective:** Further coordinate, at the state, regional and local levels, school programming in health, wellness, counseling and nutrition. Continue the ongoing collaboration with the state Department of Health and Human Services to ensure access to needed health services.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
DOE Initiative	Review Maine DOE's health and wellness programs. Potentially develop a coordinated student health and wellness office or team at the Maine DOE.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders	Plan due July 1, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Support the ongoing work of Maine DHHS to create a detailed manual on MaineCare and other health and wellness-related policy and programs.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with DHHS, stakeholders	Manual due September 1, 2012
Best Practices	Publish a page on Maine DOE website dedicated to sharing evidence-based best practices with regard to health and wellness services.	Maine DOE	September 1, 2012

## **Comprehensive School and Community Supports**

### **3. A commitment to community and family engagement**

The involvement of families and the wider community in a child's education has always been critical to student success. According to the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University, repeated studies have found that "through high school, family involvement contributed to positive results for students, including higher achievement, better attendance, more course credits earned, more responsible preparation for class, and other indicators of success in school." Research also suggests that community partnerships, in the form of service learning opportunities, for instance, also have an impact on student outcomes.

Partnerships with the world beyond the school walls are especially important in a learner-centered system of education. Learners will take part in home- and community-based learning opportunities, including online and distance learning, and will be asked to demonstrate mastery of standards through community-centered capstone projects. In order to support the principle of student-centered, anytime, anywhere learning, schools will need to interact with and engage families and communities as never before.

The Department can play a role in advancing engagement efforts by sharing models of effective family and community partnerships. As the Department redesigns its website, for instance, it could create a clearinghouse for best practices in family and community outreach.

The state has an additional resource in the form of the Maine Commission for Community Service, which coordinates various volunteerism and community service programs across Maine. While the Commission is currently housed at the State Planning Office, the administration has put forward a proposal to move it into the Department of Education. Such a move could potentially mean an expansion of the state's capacities to support school and community partnerships.

**Goal:** Schools and districts are engaged in unprecedented partnerships with families and the broader community as a way to expand learning opportunities for students.

**Objective:** Expand the state’s capacity to support family and community partnerships at the school and district level.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Collaboration and Communication	Publish a page on Maine DOE website dedicated to providing models of family and community partnerships established in schools across Maine and the nation.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders	September 1, 2012
Planning and Implementation	Develop a plan, in cooperation with the Maine Commission for Community Service, to more fully implement school and community partnerships.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with the MCCS	By completion of 2012 legislative session

## **Comprehensive School and Community Supports**

### **4. Career and workforce partnerships**

Even in this time of high unemployment, employers report that they struggle to find employees with the knowledge and skills the modern workplace requires. The era of the No Child Left Behind Act, with its emphasis on tested academic subjects, has led to a narrowing of school curricula, which has often led to a decline in course offerings in the industrial arts and other fields oriented toward career preparation. Many employers report being interested in hosting school visits or providing students with workplace internships, but find that schools show little interest or have little capacity to take advantage of such opportunities.

Building the workforce of Maine’s future will require an unprecedented partnership between employers and educational systems at all levels. Learners should have broad access to opportunities for workforce and career exploration, and educational programs at all levels should work to ensure that their students develop college- and career-ready skills. Opportunities for students to intern with employers should be expanded and flexible schedules should be created to allow students to apprentice with employers part-time while completing their studies. Efforts should be made to align curricula and coursework at all educational levels in order to create clear college and career pathways for students.

A good first step in this work would be for the Maine DOE to survey school districts, Career and Technical Education centers and adult education programs to determine current practices with regard to career and workforce partnerships. The results of the survey could then be used to develop strategies to expand such opportunities. Efforts should also be undertaken to review state law in order to identify potential barriers to expanding educational opportunities in Maine’s workplaces.

**Goal:** Students commonly access internships, apprenticeships and other opportunities to learn in workplace settings, apply academic lessons and explore potential career fields.

**Objective:** Develop a set of strategies for the expansion of career and workforce partnerships, based on feedback from school districts and the employer community.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
DOE Initiative	Survey Maine's school districts to identify current practices with regard to business and workforce partnerships.	Maine DOE	End of 2011-12 school year
Planning and Implementation	Use survey results, along with feedback from stakeholders, to develop strategies for expanding access to partnership opportunities.	Maine DOE, working with stakeholders	Strategies developed by September 2012
Policy	Undertake a review of state law and policy in order to identify barriers to career and workplace educational opportunities.	Maine DOE	By 2013 legislative session

## **Core Priority Area 5: Coordinated and Effective State Support**

Far from the classrooms where learning occurs are state-level structures and systems that, while largely unknown to learners, are critical to helping them prepare for college, careers and civic life. Whether they know it or not, learners rely on coherent and consistent structures and policies at the state level that are critical to a high-functioning, learner-centered system of education.

The educational journey that learners take is made far easier when the education systems that serve them work collaboratively to align programs and practices, making the move from one educational setting to another as seamless as possible.

Maine's public higher education institutions, for example, are taking steps to better align with each other and with the state's high schools and Career and Technical Education centers. At the other end of the educational pipeline, Maine's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant proposal, while ultimately unsuccessful in winning a grant award, established a new cooperative relationship between the state Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services, that will better integrate services for preschoolers. At the high school level, a number of Maine communities are exploring ways to bring higher education facilities to high school campuses so students can easily take advantage of advanced academic opportunities. Work is also underway at the state level to identify funding sources, policies and structures that can allow more of Maine's high school students to participate in post-secondary courses while still in high school.

It is schools and school districts that do the hard work of instructing, assessing and providing for the well-being of students; hiring effective educators, evaluating their performance and allowing them to continue their professional growth; and engaging families and the broader community in service of learning. But for them to do their important work, schools and districts need adequate and effective support from the state.

Most of that support comes in the form of state funding for schools. By approving a 2004 ballot referendum requiring a 55 percent state share of the cost of public education, Maine voters affirmed their support for a significant level of state funding for schools. Unfortunately, Maine has never reached the goal of a 55 percent state share, and the way the state's money is distributed to Maine's schools is a source of constant debate.

An effective state education agency is also important to supporting Maine's public education system. The state Department of Education has a number of regulatory duties it is required to perform under law, but it also must serve to guide and support the work of Maine's educators and school leaders.

One area where the state can play a critical role is in the coordinated integration of technology. A learner-centered educational system requires effective data systems that track learner achievement over time and across multiple educational settings. Unfortunately, local school districts have been frustrated by technology issues at the state level that have stood in the way of compatibility between local and state student information systems and streamlined submission of required data to the state. Efforts must be undertaken to address the data needs of the state's schools and school districts and to work with them to address additional data and technology needs.

Lastly, Maine's public schools need a state accountability structure focused on ensuring and accurately tracking the growth and achievement of each learner. The state recently began that work as part of crafting an application to the U.S. Department of Education for flexibility in implementing the accountability provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The work began with a public survey and three public forums in December 2011 focused on school improvement and accountability. The 1,500 survey responses and other feedback demonstrated a high level of interest in a fair and constructive accountability system that judges student achievement and school performance on multiple measures, rather than on the basis of a single standardized test. The Maine Department of Education has committed to the long-term work of engaging stakeholders in designing an accountability and improvement system that meets those needs.

This core priority area is divided into the following four sub-categories that each details a specific state structure or policy upon which the state's learners and public schools depend:

- Seamless integration of educational programs from early childhood into adulthood
- Adequate and equitable state resources for Maine's schools
- Comprehensive integration of technology
- A robust and transparent accountability and improvement system

## **Coordinated and Effective State Support**

### **1. Seamless integration of educational programs from early childhood into adulthood**

For a learner-centered educational system to function, all the elements of that system must be carefully aligned to allow learners to move at their own pace and have multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency. Too frequently, however, the various pieces of the educational system are disconnected from one another. Early childhood programs are disconnected from the elementary school programs they feed into. A middle school may embrace a learner-centered model, but the high school its students are to attend does not. Barriers are sometimes erected that prevent students from having access to Career and Technical Education programs, or that complicate the transition from high school to post-secondary educational opportunities.

Every effort must be made, from the highest levels, to ensure that educational programs are fully aligned and that they all embrace a model of schooling that puts the needs of the learner first.

Some of this important work is already underway. Recent meetings between the Maine DOE and the state's institutions of public higher education have resulted in an agreement to establish a collaborative working group to focus exclusively on post-secondary transition issues. This past summer, Governor LePage signed an executive order establishing the Task Force on Expanding Early Post-Secondary Access for High School Students in Maine. The task force will soon release a report of initial findings, but intends to continue its work to expand access to early college opportunities.

At the other end of the age spectrum, the state missed out on a federal Race to the Top grant aimed at improving early childhood programming, but state officials intend to move ahead with as much of the proposed work as possible, including the development of a permanent inter-agency working group devoted to coordinating early childhood policies and practices.

Each of these efforts represents a significant step toward a more fully aligned educational system from early childhood into adulthood.

**Goal: Maine students are able to move easily through a learner-centered educational system fully integrated from early childhood through adulthood.**

**Objective: Eliminate as many policy and operational barriers as possible that block access to educational options .**

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Collaboration and Communication	Move forward with structural and other reforms as outlined in the state's recent Race to the Top Early Childhood Challenge grant.	Maine DOE, Maine DHHS and stakeholders	Progress report due July 1, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Create the Education Coordinating Committee's college transitions working group; complete working group's initial report to the ECC regarding college and career readiness initiatives.	Maine DOE, higher education institutions, Education Coordinating Committee (ECC)	Interim report due to ECC May 1, 2012
Policy	Implement the initial findings of the governor's early post-secondary opportunities task force; support the ongoing work of the task force.	Maine DOE, early post-secondary task force	Task force interim report under development

**Coordinated and Effective State Support****2. Adequate and equitable state resources for Maine's schools**

Under Maine's Constitution, it is the state's "several towns" that are required to "make suitable provision, at their own expense, for the support and maintenance of public schools." A significant state role in K-12 education is essential, however, to ensure that all of Maine's young people, regardless of zip code, have equal access to a good education.

The state supports Maine schools in two ways. First, the state provides a considerable amount of funding to local schools in the form of General Purpose Aid for local schools (GPA), from which local schools are funded. For the 2012-2013 school year, state GPA funding is budgeted to total more than \$900 million.

What constitutes the appropriate level of state funding for schools (and how that funding is then distributed to the state's school districts) is a subject of constant debate in Augusta. Last legislative session, a proposal was put forward to have an independent study of Maine's school funding commissioned, and such a study should be undertaken as soon as sufficient funding can be found to finance it.

Maine's schools are also supported by the state Department of Education, which provides resources and support to Maine's schools as well as undertaking various regulatory duties as required by state and federal law. A recent study of the Department, however, undertaken by the Council of Chief State School Officers, found that the agency lacked much of the capacity it needed to effectively support Maine's schools and school districts. The state's school and district leaders have echoed this finding, stating that they would like to see the Department become more effective in its support and assistance.

An opportunity for a full-scale review of the Department's work is coming in the form of Governor LePage's zero-based budget initiative, which will require state agencies to review all programs and practices in a search for efficiencies and improved levels of service. The Department should partner with stakeholders as part of this effort to review the work of the agency and provide suggestions for improvement.

The Department's staff is already at work reviewing internal operating procedures and practices, with the goal of improving efficiencies and customer service.

**Goal: Maine's schools are supported by adequate and effective state resources.**

**Objective:** Undertake an independent review of the state school funding system; continue ongoing work to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the state Department of Education in providing technical and other kinds of support.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Policy	Undertake an independent review of the state school funding system; propose potential policy changes, if any, to the next legislature.	Maine DOE, Maine Legislature	Complete report by January 1, 2013
Policy	Use zero-based budget initiative to further review and assess Maine DOE programs and processes; propose reforms in the next biennial budget bill	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders, Maine Legislature	Proposed reforms to be included in next biennial budget bill

## **Coordinated and Effective State Support**

### **3. Comprehensive integration of technology**

Since the deployment of the state's one-to-one computing initiative a decade ago, Maine has been a leader in the integration of technology and education. There remain, however, far greater opportunities to employ technology to improve learner outcomes.

As addressed elsewhere in this plan, online and distance learning options can provide students with additional opportunities to achieve and demonstrate proficiencies. Additionally, new computer-based assessment tools can provide educators with real-time information on student achievement, allowing teachers to adapt instructional practices to meet the needs of learners. New data tools, such as the State Longitudinal Data System, will be able to track learner growth over time, and as schools move to a proficiency-based system of schooling, advanced new student information systems will allow educators to track the achievement, by each student, of multiple learning outcomes.

Effective implementation of information technology can be a cost saver as well. Public education is a remarkably paperwork-intensive business and commonly used documents such as Individualized Education Plans, which could and should be created digitally, are too often drafted on paper even now. Significant cost savings could be realized if more modern data and information technology systems were put into place. This is especially true with regard to information and data systems at the state level, where effective implementation and integration of data systems has been an issue.

There are cultural changes that need to take place as well. As technology continues to transform modern life, schools, to remain relevant, must also use technology in transformative ways. Too often, educators and administrators have seen technology as an add-on or supplement, whose primary function was to support more traditional instructional and administrative practices. In the years to come, significant work must be done to more fully and comprehensively integrate technology into the everyday work of schools and districts—to take technology integration to the “next level.”

The first step in all this would be for the Department to undertake a detailed review of current data and technology initiatives and needs, both at the state and local level, with an eye toward developing an information technology “comprehensive plan.” Efforts must be made within the Department itself to better coordinate and integrate various technology projects. The Department should also work with IT directors in Maine schools to identify training and support needs.

**Goal:** Information and instructional technologies are supporting instructional practice and efficient school system operations.

**Objective:** Develop a “comprehensive plan” for technology integration, both in Maine’s schools and school districts and at the Maine DOE, developed in collaboration with IT personnel and educators across the state.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Planning and Implementation	Develop comprehensive inventory of ongoing technology and data projects and initiatives, with current status on each.	Maine DOE	March 1, 2012
Collaboration and Communication	Survey school unit IT directors and administrators regarding technology and data needs; use responses to develop detailed data and technology support plan.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders	September 1, 2012

## **Coordinated and Effective State Support**

### **4. A robust and transparent accountability and improvement system**

Ensuring that education policies and programs at both the state and local levels are effective requires a robust, transparent accountability and improvement system that tracks the growth and achievement of every learner. The accountability system employed by the state today, designed to comply with the federal No Child Left Behind Act, has a number of flaws. It does not measure the growth and achievement of each learner individually, but establishes the success or failure of educators, schools and school districts by comparing this year’s class of fourth graders, for instance, to last year’s class. The system does not recognize that learners not only come to school in different places developmentally, but that they advance through their educational careers at different paces as well. Rather than using multiple measures of student achievement, the current system judges success or failure based on a single score on a single assessment at a single moment in time.

With the U.S. Department of Education expressing a willingness to allow states flexibility with regard to the accountability provisions of No Child Left Behind, Maine should undertake the effort to design and implement a comprehensive accountability structure focused on learner growth and achievement, one that uses multiple measures of learner proficiency tracked over time. Such a system should also fairly but readily identify underperforming schools, and ensure deployment of targeted and worthwhile assistance and support.

**Goal:** An effective school and district accountability and improvement system helps Maine’s schools meet the needs of all learners.

**Objective:** As part of the federal NCLB waiver process, develop a rigorous and transparent state-based accountability and improvement system that makes use of multiple measures, tracks learner growth and achievement over time, publicly reports that achievement, and holds educators, schools and school systems to account.

**Action Steps:**

Strategy	Action Step	Responsible party	Deadline:
Planning and Implementation	Develop a plan for the design and implementation of a new state accountability system consistent with the principles of the NCLB flexibility package.	Maine DOE, in cooperation with stakeholders, Maine Legislature	Waiver application due February 21, 2012; implementation to follow

## Appendix 2

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### *Common Core ELA and mathematics implementation plans*

## **CCSS for ELA Implementation in Maine**

Implementing the Common Core State Standards for ELA will be a multi-year, multi-phased process. Immediately upon adoption of the CCSS, the State's implementation plan was launched (see below). This plan includes three phases:

Phase 1: Introduction to the CCSS for ELA (2010-2012)

Phase 2: Alignment of Curriculum and Instruction to the CCSS for ELA (2011-2013)

Phase 3: Implementing the CCSS for ELA: Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment (2012-2014)

Recognizing that Maine school systems will be in different places with respect to implementation, the school years indicated for work in these phases overlap, with the ultimate goal being that all Maine school systems will reach full implementation by the 2014-15 school year. In Maine, "full implementation" is intended to include administration of assessments based on CCSS in the 2014-2015 school year. Full implementation of curriculum and instruction aligned to the CCSS will be completed by June 2014.

### **Maine CCSS for ELA Transition Timeline**

#### **Phase 1**

#### **Introduction to Common Core State Standards: Getting Familiar 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 School Years**

**The goals for this phase of the implementation plan included the following:**

- Develop understanding of the impetus for and development of the CCSS for ELA, including college and career readiness, rigor, and 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning
- Explore the big ideas (shifts) and concepts that influence the interpretation of the standards, such as text complexity, academic vocabulary, and integration across strands
- Become familiar with the content of the CCSS and the supporting appendices for ELA

**Activities to support this phase:**

- **Creation of CCSS for ELA web pages on Maine DOE ELA home site** where CCSS documents for ELA (standards and appendices) were posted in summer of 2010. <http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/standards.html>. These navigation of these documents was further refined during the 2010-11 school year to enable easier access to the K-5 and 6-12 standards, specific standard strands (e.g. reading, writing, listening/speaking, and language) as well as portions of the CCSS for ELA introduction and appendices that support the specific strands. Additionally, Maine's CCSS for ELA website was further refined to include a resource section to support the phases of implementation (Phase 1: Introduction; Phase 2: Alignment; Phase 3: Implementation). As presentations, resources, and other materials are developed, they are posted under the appropriate phase of implementation for the field to access.

- **Presentation of regional and school system workshops to introduce Maine educators to the CCSS for ELA.** During the Fall of 2010 through the Spring of 2011, the MDOE ELA content specialists provided a variety of introductory workshops to school systems across Maine. These included:
  - 4 day-long, regionally based workshop sessions for K-12 educators to introduce the ELA CCSS to educators from across Maine. Approximately 200 educators attended each of the regionally held sessions. Educators had the opportunity to explore the organization and structure of the standards and the supporting appendices in the first half of the workshop, and then broke into K-5 and 6-12 span groups to learn about the specific standards for their grade levels.
  - The ELA Content Specialist provided a variety of workshops designed to provide introduction to the CCSS for ELA to school systems, regional professional learning networks, and statewide education organizations during the 2010-11 school year. These workshops ranged in length from 3-6 hours each depending upon the setting. The power points used in these workshop sessions were posted on the ELA homepage so that all Maine educators would have access to them.
  - The ELA Content Specialists met with the 8 regional superintendent groups throughout the 2010-11 school year, providing an overview of the CCSS for ELA and planning for next steps. Additionally, regular updates on CCSS for ELA implementation activities are communicate by the MDOE regional representatives who meet with the regional superintendents and curriculum leaders on a monthly basis.
  - The ELA Content Specialists provided training in the ELA CCSS to the 25 facilitators of MDOE's Literacy Leaders' Network. In turn, these facilitators provided two workshop sessions related to the ELA CCSS in each of the 20 Literacy Leader Network meeting locations during the 2010-11 school year, reaching another 400 K-5 educators.
- **Development and presentation of a CCSS for ELA Introductory Webinar Series.** The ELA content specialists developed a series of webinars related to introducing the ELA CCSS that were provided throughout the 2010-11 school year. The differences between the CCSS and Maine's previous ELA standards were highlighted and suggestions for beginning implementation activities were provided. Each webinar has been archived and is posted on the ELA homepage for educators to access.  
[http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/online\\_pd.html](http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/online_pd.html)
- **Development of resources to support study of CCSS for ELA.** During the 2010-11 school year, MDOE Content Specialists developed and posted an array of tools and resources for Maine educators to use to introduce themselves to the CCSS for ELA.  
<http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/guided-study.html>

- **Regular communications about the CCSS for ELA via the MDOE’s ELA List Serv and *Literacy Links* newsletter.** MDOE ELA content specialists regularly post information about the Common Core State Standards for ELA on the ELA listserv, through *Literacy Links*, and on the ELA homepage. Several editions of the 2010-11 *Literacy Links* series, sent monthly to approximately 1,500 Maine educators, introduced the strands of the CCSS for ELA and provided resources for learning more about each strand. Literacy Links Monthly Newsletters:  
<http://www.maine.gov/education/rf/newsletters/index.html>

## Phase 2

### Alignment of Curriculum and Instruction to the CCSS for ELA 2011-12 and 2012-2013 School Years

**The goals for this phase of the implementation plan include the following:**

- Deepen educator understanding of the shifts required by the CCSS for ELA, such as text complexity, writing from sources, academic vocabulary, literacy standards across content areas, etc.
- Provide resources for examining local curricula to determine alignment and gaps, including documentation of professional learning needs
- Provide tools for evaluating current instructional materials and practices to insure alignment to CCSS for ELA
- Connect K-12 CCSS for ELA implementation to higher education and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

**Activities to support this phase:**

- **Presentation of regional and school system workshops for Maine educators and organizations to support understanding of the ELA shifts and curriculum alignment for the CCSS for ELA.** ELA content specialists continued to provide site-based, school district workshops and technical assistance as requested, as well as workshops and presentations for statewide organizations and institutions of higher education. These sessions included content from introductory sessions described above, but also extended to focus on assistance with the CCSS shifts for ELA, as well as the curriculum alignment and introduction to the Smarter Balanced Assessment system. Examples of workshops include:
  - Partnering with the University of Southern Maine to present a series of CCSS workshops during the Winter and Spring of 2012
  - Partnering with ASCD to provide regional workshops during the Fall of 2011 and Spring of 2012
  - Partnering with Navigating the Real World to present regional workshops during the Fall of 2011 and Spring of 2012
  - Partnering with professional organizations such as Maine Council for English Language Arts, Maine Principals Association, Maine Education Association, and

Maine Association for Directors of Special Education to provide professional development for their members

- Providing workshops for faculty members from the University of Maine at Farmington, as well as through the Literacy Faculty Group meetings held quarterly with members of the literacy faculty from Maine's colleges and universities that have teacher preparation programs.
  - Embedding CCSS for ELA implementation content in the 2011-12 Literacy Leaders Network series.
- **Development and presentation of CCSS for ELA Webinar Series focused on the ELA Shifts and Strands.** The ELA content specialists developed a series of webinars related to literacy strands and shifts required by the CCSS for ELA that were provided throughout the 2011-12 school year. Each webinar has been archived and is posted on the ELA homepage for educators to access.  
[http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/online\\_pd.html](http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/online_pd.html)
  - **Development of open education resources (OERs) to support understanding of the ELA strands and shifts in the CCSS for ELA.** During the 2011-12 school year, MDOE Content Specialists developed and posted an array of tools and resources for Maine educators related to the CCSS for ELA strands and shifts. Examples of these resources include:
    - Tools for unpacking standards and for engaging in curriculum alignment, including comparative charts for reading and writing across disciplines at the 6-12 span  
[http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/ccss\\_modules.html](http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/ccss_modules.html)  
  
[Reading Standards 6-12 - Comparative Chart by Anchor](#)  
  
[Writing Standards 6-12 - Comparative Chart by Anchor](#)
    - Resources related to ELA Shifts in Practice, including specific resources for text complexity.  
[http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/ccss\\_modules.html](http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/ccss_modules.html)
    - Literacy Micro-courses that provide self-guided study of the foundational reading skills, vocabulary, and comprehension for educators across the K-5 span.  
<http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/lmc.html>
    - In partnership with the New England Comprehensive Center (NECC), the MDOE developed a tool to support K-12 educators in reviewing instructional materials for their alignment to the CCSS for ELA, and is currently developing a curriculum companion tool to assist K-12 educators with curriculum alignment to the CCSS for ELA.
  - **Regular communications about the CCSS for ELA via the MDOE's ELA List Serv and *Literacy Links* newsletter.** MDOE ELA content specialists regularly post information about the Common Core State Standards for ELA on the ELA listserv,

through *Literacy Links*, and on the ELA homepage. Again in 2011-12, the *Literacy Links* series, sent monthly to approximately 1,500 Maine educators, detailed the strands of the CCSS for ELA and provided resources for learning more about each strand. Literacy Links Monthly Newsletters:

<http://www.maine.gov/education/rf/newsletters/index.html>

- **English Language Arts SCASS.** The ELA content specialists joined the CCSSO ELA SCASS to collaborate with 10 other states to support transition to CCSS. Implementation resources are developed by SCASS member states and shared across the states. In 2011-12, focus of the ELA SCASS was on text complexity tools and professional development resources which are now being used by MDOE ELA specialists as they work with Maine educators and are available on the MDOE ELA website.
- **Early Learning Guidelines Alignment.** During 2011-12, the ELA content specialists worked with the MDOE's early childhood learning specialists and a stakeholder group to begin the process of aligning Maine's early literacy guidelines for birth-5 with the CCSS for ELA. This work will continue into the 2012-13 school year and will include professional development components to support early childhood educators' understanding of the CCSS for ELA.
- **Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.** During 2011-12, the ELA content specialists began service on Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium workgroups. One ELA specialist is serving on the Item and Performance Task workgroup, lending expertise to the development of the SBAC ELA item and task specifications and reviewing stimuli and items being developed. This work will inform support that will be provided to Maine school systems as they engage in curriculum alignment and transition to the SBAC system. The other ELA content specialist is serving as a Teacher Involvement Coordinator for the MDOE. In this role, she is recruiting Maine educators to work on SBAC ELA item development and review, enabling Maine educators to become increasingly familiar with the SBAC system.
- **Maine Statewide Literacy Plan.** During 2011-12, the MDOE wrote and finalized its comprehensive, statewide literacy plan, *Literacy for ME*, which will guide the MDOE's literacy related work moving forward. Included in this plan are specific recommendations and components related to the CCSS standards and curriculum alignment for ELA, as well as instruction, assessment, and professional learning, including transition to CCSS. <http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/literacy/>
- **Institutions of Higher Education.** MDOE ELA Content Specialists participated in a full day workshop with IHE to identify transition issues and needs. This day provided opportunity to educate IHE faculty and staff about the CCSS and to identify ways in which the MDOE can support IHE in making the transition to the CCSS.
- **Week long training of DOE team with WIDA to understand CCSS and ELL**

**Phase 3**  
**Implementing the CCSS for ELA: Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment**  
**2012-13 and 2013-2014 School Years**

**The goals for this phase of the implementation plan include the following:**

- Continue to provide ongoing professional development focused on the shifts required by the CCSS for ELA and on curriculum and instruction alignment
- Provide ongoing professional learning and resources to assist in transition to Smarter Balanced Assessment System
- *Insure school system capacity to finalize and implement local curricula aligned to CCSS for ELA and connected to Smarter Balanced Assessment System*

**Activities to support this phase:**

- **Presentation of regional and school system workshops for Maine educators and organizations to support understanding of the ELA shifts and curriculum alignment for the CCSS for ELA.** ELA content specialists continued to provide site-based, school district workshops and technical assistance as requested, as well as workshops and presentations for statewide organizations and institutions of higher education. These sessions included content from introductory sessions described above, but also extended to focus on assistance with the CCSS shifts for ELA, as well as the curriculum alignment and introduction to the Smarter Balanced Assessment system. Examples of workshops include:
  - Partnering with the University of Southern Maine and the Maine Association of Special Education Directors to present a multi-day literacy institute focused on assisting Maine school systems in developing and refining CCSS for ELA implementation plans. The institute will support approximately 40 school systems (300 educators).  
<http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/ela/professionaldevelopment.html#events>
  - Providing site-based, school district workshops and technical assistance as requested to support alignment and instruction needs related to CCSS for ELA implementation.
  - Providing a Cross Discipline Literacy Network to support K-12 educators with professional learning opportunities via face-to-face regional networking sessions and a literacy strand webinar series. Webinars will focus on the CCSS ELA Shifts as well as the literacy standards across the disciplines. MDOE ELA content specialists will lead this work in partnership with content specialists from other disciplines, such as math, social studies, science, and visual and performing arts. Content specialists will work collaboratively with Maine educators who have content and literacy expertise to develop the webinars and face-to-face content for the network. This will result in building capacity in regional locations by training trainers who can then train other educators in their regions. The network is projected to serve approximately 800 Maine educators.

- Developing and hosting additional institute opportunities to address CCSS for ELA implementation needs.
- Partnering with professional organizations to expand access to training and technical assistance
- **Development and presentation of a CCSS for ELA Webinar Series focused on the ELA Shifts, Curriculum Alignment, and Smarter Balanced Assessment Considerations.** The ELA content specialists will develop a series of webinars related to ELA shifts, curriculum alignment, and the Smarter Balanced Assessment system that will be delivered during the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years. Webinars will be archived and posted on the ELA homepage for educators to access.
- **Continue development of open education resources (OERs) to support understanding of the ELA shifts in the CCSS, curriculum alignment, and instructional alignment.** During the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years, MDOE Content Specialists will continue to develop and post an array of tools and resources for Maine educators to use related to CCSS for ELA shifts, alignment, instruction, and assessment. Additionally, the ELA content specialists will expand digital resources through the Maine Laptop Technology Initiative and other partnerships including SBAC, SCASS, ASCELA, NCTE, and others.
- **Regular communications about the CCSS for ELA via the MDOE's ELA List Serv and *Literacy Links* newsletter.** MDOE ELA content specialists will continue to regularly post information about the Common Core State Standards for ELA on the ELA listserv, through *Literacy Links*, and on the ELA homepage. In 2012-13, the *Literacy Links* series, sent monthly to approximately 1,500 Maine educators, will focus on the ELA shifts and feature specific tools for curriculum alignment.
- **English Language Arts SCASS.** The ELA content specialists will continue their work in the CCSSO ELA SCASS to develop implementation resources for the CCSS for ELA.
- **Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.** During 2012-14, the ELA content specialists will continue working on the development of the Smarter Balanced Assessment system in partnership with other SBAC state consultants and will continue to involve Maine educators in item authoring and review opportunities. Additionally, work will commence through workshops, webinars, and resource development to support educator understanding of the SBAC system and its connection to instruction.
- **Maine Statewide Literacy Plan.** During 2012-13, the MDOE will begin implementation of its comprehensive, statewide literacy plan, *Literacy for ME*. Several initial implementation components include the development of an electronic toolkit to guide local comprehensive literacy planning that will include resources related to the CCSS for ELA, instruction, assessment, and professional learning. Additionally, a series of

regional meetings will be held to support local comprehensive planning efforts and these sessions for provide opportunities to connect educators to CCSS for ELA resources via the electronic toolkit, and to emphasize the role of the CCSS for support high levels of literacy achievement through collaborative efforts across the birth-adult span.

- **Institutions of Higher Education.** MDOE ELA Content Specialists will partner with IHE to assist with the revision of pre-service teacher training programs to insure alignment with the CCSS for ELA.

## **Common Core State Standards in Mathematics**

### **Awareness:**

During the 2010-2011 school year MDOE held various workshops across the state, hosted by districts, regional curriculum groups, and higher education, to inform the field of the new standards and where to find information and support. A webpage for mathematics information was developed and located at: <http://maine.gov/education/lres/math/standards.html>

The mathematics specialists also presented at various regional superintendent meetings and CTE director meetings across the state.

### **Transition:**

MDOE in collaboration with the Association of Teachers of Mathematics in Maine (ATOMIM) offered a series of Dine and Discuss Sessions focusing on developing a deep understanding of the 8 Mathematical Practices in the 2010-2011 school year. During the 2011-2012 school year the Dine and Discuss Sessions target two audiences, elementary with a focus on algebraic thinking and the common core standards, and high school with a focus on reasoning and sense making and the common core standards.

### **Implementation:**

A webinar series was also created and delivered to address alignment and implementation. These webinars and resource materials are posted at the following site for the field to access: [http://maine.gov/education/lres/math/ccss\\_pd.html](http://maine.gov/education/lres/math/ccss_pd.html)

Presentations by DOE at the annual ATOMIM conference were focused on implementation of the CCSS using the critical focus areas and also aligning tasks to the mathematical practice, mathematical content and content literacy standards.

### **Ongoing PD:**

During the 2012-2013 school year, DOE and ATOMIM will again be offering Dine and Discuss sessions across the state focusing on the Common Core standards. This year we will be looking at sample tasks from SBAC and the Illustrative Mathematics Project to help inform changes in instructional practices. A second topic of Dine and Discuss sessions will be to look to the NCSM support materials around the 8 Mathematical Practices and how they can be used in classrooms to help support student/teacher understanding.

MDOE mathematics specialists and MDOE MLTI will collaboratively provide full day PD sessions across the state looking at sample tasks and use of technology to support student learning and

understanding addressing content, pedagogy and technology knowledge. The sessions will be provided for the elementary, middle school, and high school level.

As with all PD, the materials used during the sessions provided will be posted on the department webpage.

### **Common Core State Standards Noteshare Notebooks:**

There are 4 interactive notebooks organized by grade spans K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and High School. Contained in each of these interactive notebooks are professional development support materials for teachers to aid in the understanding and implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.

As a classroom teacher, time is limited for searching out support materials to gain a deep understanding of the new standards and how to align these to current classroom practices and curriculum. These notebooks have embedded links to resources in the appropriate place within the standards document. As teachers read through the document they have all the links to resources, webinars, and hands-on activities for supporting the transition to and implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.

There will be a series of webinars/PD sessions to inform teachers of this resource and how to best use the resource in their work at their district/classroom level. All PD opportunities will encourage all teachers of mathematics, Special Education and ELL, to attend and participate. These notebooks will be posted on the DOE website in two versions – one for Mac users and one for non-Mac users.

## Appendix 3

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### *“Global Best Practices Toolkit”*



# GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES

## *An Internationally Benchmarked Self-Assessment Tool for Secondary Learning*

# A SPECIAL THANKS

The authors of this tool would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to the New England Secondary School Consortium Council, our regional steering committee, for the support and leadership it has provided during the first year of our existence. As champions for the vision, mission, and goals of the Consortium, our Council has been instrumental in making our work—including this resource—a success.

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# ABOUT THIS TOOL

*Global Best Practices: An Internationally Benchmarked Self-Assessment Tool for Secondary Learning* is a practical, action-oriented tool for teachers, school administrators, superintendents, school boards, parents, and other members of a school community. The tool grew out of a recognition that national borders no longer define the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind that students need for success, and that New England's high schools may need assistance reviewing learning standards, organizational structures, leadership models, teaching strategies, professional development, and student outcomes in relation to research on high-performing educational systems and practices. *Global Best Practices* is a first step toward defining, in detail, the characteristics of effective 21<sup>st</sup> century education and applying them to the creation of new models of teaching, learning, and leading in today's high schools.

This tool distills some common characteristics of high-performing schools in the United States and abroad, and presents them in a concise, user-friendly format. Rather than give school leaders and teachers a simple list of recommendations, the tool offers a practical, step-by-step process that schools can use to assess their relative performance in key areas and shape their school-improvement plans. *Global Best Practices* is intended to make this important research more accessible and useful to the schools and educators of New England.

*Global Best Practices* will be revised and updated as new research and strategies emerge, and as we receive feedback from practitioners who are using the tool in their schools. If you have recommendations for strengthening this resource, we strongly encourage you to submit suggestions to [gbpfeedback@newenglandssc.org](mailto:gbpfeedback@newenglandssc.org).

## STRANDS + DIMENSIONS

*Global Best Practices* is organized into three main strands, each with its own subsections, or dimensions. The strands identify broad areas of focus that every school community should address in its improvement work, while the numbered dimensions are intended to guide in-depth investigations into specific issues or strategies. Each dimension includes comprehensive descriptions that define the concept being explored, as well as a selection of sample strategies and evidence to provide relevant examples of specific policies, practices, and outcomes that schools can consider and reflect on.

### TEACHING + LEARNING

- 1.1 Equity
- 1.2 Personalization + Relevance
- 1.3 Academic Expectations
- 1.4 Standards-Based Education
- 1.5 Assessment Practices
- 1.6 International + Multicultural Learning
- 1.7 Technology Integration
- 1.8 Learning Communities

### ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN

- 2.1 Vision, Mission + Action Plan
- 2.2 School Culture
- 2.3 Multiple Pathways
- 2.4 Transitions
- 2.5 Interventions + Support
- 2.6 Time + Space
- 2.7 Data Systems + Applications
- 2.8 Continual Improvement

### SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

- 3.1 Teacher Recruitment + Retention
- 3.2 Administrative Leadership
- 3.3 Shared Leadership
- 3.4 Moral Courage

## HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

Global Best Practices is a comprehensive tool designed to equip schools with a thoughtful process for in-depth professional and institutional self-reflection. While schools are encouraged to work through all twenty dimensions in this resource, it is not necessary to tackle the entire process all at once. Schools may choose a particular strand—such as Teaching + Learning, for example—or a selection of dimensions relevant to their action plan, and then work through these sections first. The process can also be broken up over multiple months, semesters, or years. The most important thing is that schools use this document in ways that work best for them—there is no “right” or “wrong” way to use this tool.

The pages that follow are intentionally structured to be simple, straightforward, and easy to follow. Each numbered dimension offers a detailed profile of a foundational concept or strategy, and a four-step process schools can follow to investigate and reflect on their performance in a particular area. The instructions here will walk your school through the four steps.

### STEP 1 >>

#### READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

In Step 1, schools review descriptions of the three performance levels. Keep in mind that these performance levels are merely concise profiles of high schools at various stages of a school-improvement process. Your school may closely resemble one of the descriptions (or it may not), or it could be implementing different elements of all three levels. The purpose of this step is not to force your school into any one category, but to provoke thoughtful, self-reflective faculty discussions about where your school is on a school-improvement continuum. At this time, the educators engaged in the self-assessment can pose questions to one another, take notes, and identify data, documents, or other resources that should be consulted to provide a more detailed picture of what your school is or is not doing in the dimension.

### STEP 2 >>

#### RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

In Step 2, schools are provided a list of sample research-based strategies for school improvement. In some cases, your school may already be implementing one or more of the sample strategies; in others, none of the strategies will apply. The list is intended to give schools a sense of the kinds of organizational or instructional practices that are aligned with the dimension and help to explain it in greater detail. These examples offer a range of potential strategies schools might consider if it is determined that work needs to be undertaken in a particular area. Once the list has been reviewed and discussed (either in multiple small groups or as a large group), schools record the specific strategies being implemented in their school to improve student outcomes, instructional quality, or organizational effectiveness in the dimension. We recommend that schools describe the major features of a strategy (i.e., what makes it effective) when recording it during Step 2. If the space provided is insufficient, schools can record their strategies on a separate sheet of paper.

# A NEW ENGLAND SECONDARY SCHOOL CONSORTIUM RESOURCE

## STEP 3 >>

### RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

In Step 3, schools review a list of sample evidence that illustrates the kind of data or outcomes schools should look for to determine if school-improvement strategies have had a positive impact on student performance or the school itself. It is not enough to have implemented a strategy; schools need to know how strategies are impacting students. Again, your school may already be seeing the kinds of results reflected in the list or it may not—the examples are merely intended to give schools a general sense of the types of evidence, whether quantitative or qualitative, they might want to consider or investigate to assess progress in the dimension. It is important that schools strive to record only objective, empirical data and evidence, not subjective perceptions or wishful thinking. If, for example, the sample evidence refers to student surveys, and your school has not conducted student surveys, participating educators should not fill in the blank space with what they may believe to be the case. Anecdotal evidence may be sufficient if confirmed by multiple individuals and supported by several specific examples. If your school does not have any concrete evidence of performance or progress in the dimension, then the next step may be a collective decision to consider collecting and tracking relevant data. The goal of this step is to determine what your school already knows—or needs to find out—about your performance in a given area.

## STEP 4 >>

### SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

In Step 4, schools reflect on the performance descriptions, strategies, and evidence they have reviewed and discussed, and then place themselves on the continuum of school improvement described in the dimension. The score recorded for your school should reflect a collective consensus that has resulted from an open, honest, and frank discussion. One option is to bring together a representative cross-section of school staff and ask them to complete a self-assessment individually. After all the scores are compiled, determine the mean score and discuss, as a group, why different individuals came up with different scores. Keep in mind that a self-assessment score is not a perfect measure of performance in the dimension, but only a useful guide when engaging in the substantive work of school improvement. If you determine that your school is on the lower end of the continuum, don't be disheartened—a low score should not be seen as evidence of failure or a cause for blame, just as a higher score should not become an excuse to rest on your laurels and stop learning and growing as a community of professionals.

## A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

**1** This tool does not provide an exhaustive list of performance evidence or strategies, and the descriptions are only intended to be representative, not all-inclusive. Many examples of effective teaching and learning are not represented in these pages—not because they are unimportant, but because of the limitations of formatting and page space.

**2** The sections and dimensions in this tool focus attention on a selection of important concepts and high-impact areas to provide schools with a logical structure and process to follow. Obviously, real schools are not neatly organized into clear categories, educational research is unable to take every influence and factor into account, and systemic school-improvement never unfolds according to a perfectly charted step-by-step process. Schools are complex, interdependent learning communities with unique qualities and characteristics, strengths and weaknesses, teachers and students—which means that no tool or process, no matter how well devised, will be able to anticipate or address every need.

**3** *Global Best Practices* is a research-based tool that is guided by an unwavering belief in educational equity—giving every student a fair chance to succeed in life. The tool assumes that every graduate should leave high school equipped with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind needed to succeed in a four-year postsecondary-degree program and in the globally competitive careers of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. By proceeding on this assumption, the Consortium is not advocating that students be forced to attend college or that enrolling in college is the best choice for every student. Rather, we are advocating that secondary schools apply universally high standards and expectations regardless of a student's background or professed aspirations. Since few adolescents know what they want to do with their lives, and few adults, for that matter, can confidently say that they knew their educational and career path at the age of fourteen, it is our belief that high schools should endeavor to expand life opportunities for students, not foreclose on them prematurely.

**4** While many educators and policymakers have recently begun emphasizing the importance of international benchmarking, there is still no consensus on the precise definition of this term or how international benchmarking can be effectively conducted in high schools. In this tool, both domestic and international research studies were considered, and the descriptions and strategies presented in these pages are an attempt to distill the most relevant findings. Instead of simply importing international research with little thought given to the particular characteristics of American schools, we have made efforts to translate this research in ways that will be familiar to American educators. Just as a literal translation of a foreign-language text will produce a clunky, unreadable document, we have endeavored to convert research findings into logical guidance that is appropriate to American educational contexts. And given the vagaries of cultural context, educational research conducted in the United States will be the most relevant to American schools. For more information about the research that informs this tool, consult the *Global Best Practices* literature review.

USING THE PRIORITY GUIDE

Once your school has completed a section or worked through all twenty of the individual self-assessments, you can use the priority guide on this page to help determine school-improvement priorities and next steps. The guide is merely a graphical aid that will give schools a visual overview of how each individual self-assessment was scored, which can be helpful in determining priorities—if a school scores lower in one dimension than another, it may indicate a weakness or need that should be addressed. The scoring scale used throughout this tool is not an absolute measure of performance, and school leaders must be thoughtful and judicious when determining school priorities as they consider numerous contextual, political, financial, and personal factors that extend well beyond the purview of this tool.

		LOWER PRIORITY					HIGHER PRIORITY				
TEACHING + LEARNING		5	4	3	2	1	NA				
1.1	Equity										
1.2	Personalization + Relevance										
1.3	Academic Expectations										
1.4	Standards-Based Education										
1.5	Assessment Practices										
1.6	International + Multicultural Learning										
1.7	Technology Integration										
1.8	Learning Communities										
ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN		5	4	3	2	1	NA				
2.1	Vision, Mission + Action Plan										
2.2	School Culture										
2.3	Multiple Pathways										
2.4	Transitions										
2.5	Interventions + Support										
2.6	Time + Space										
2.7	Data Systems + Applications										
2.8	Continual Improvement										
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP		5	4	3	2	1	NA				
3.1	Teacher Recruitment + Retention										
3.2	Administrative Leadership										
3.3	Shared Leadership										
3.4	Moral Courage										

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
Academic, social, and aspirational inequities across the student body may have been identified, but no formal or strategic actions have been undertaken to address them. Underperforming students (defined as performing below grade level) typically fail to catch up to their peers, and school data indicate that these students generally come from economically, socially, or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. The school's courses, curricula, and instruction do not promote common high expectations for all students. The academic program is a complex hierarchy of tiered tracks and teachers are not trained in classroom differentiation or other personalization strategies. Student performance and behavioral data are collected and reviewed at the school level, but individual and student-subgroup data are not disaggregated or analyzed. While all students have access to enriching school activities and co-curricular programs, actual participation patterns reveal that disadvantaged students participate at significantly lower rates. Some staff members, parents, and community members display considerable resistance to adopting strategies that would promote a more equitable school structure.	Inequities across the student body are monitored regularly, at least annually. The school is beginning to use disaggregated data and formative assessments to identify individual student needs. The school offers some support opportunities to academically struggling students, but interventions are not systemic or integrated into regular courses. Some academic tracks have been eliminated, but barriers to accessing higher-level courses remain in place. A small number of staff, parents, and community members remain resistant to adopting strategies that promote greater equity. Participation in enriching school activities and co-curricular programs is relatively consistent across the student body, including those students who may have formerly been disengaged. Student voice and personalization are considered when programs are developed or refined.	The school community has embraced the belief that all students can succeed. Teachers actively promote positive self-images and high academic expectations for all students. Every student is enrolled in academically rigorous, college-preparatory courses, and the school does not offer "watered-down" or outdated courses that do not prepare students for success in college or modern careers. Classroom instruction goes beyond more traditional didactic practices to include personalized, student-centered strategies that engage and support diverse learning styles. Course expectations—including those for assignments, assessments, and grading—are explicit and public. A coherent system of performance monitoring and student interventions promotes academic acceleration (not traditional remediation) for both underperforming and high-performing students. A variety of academic options and graduation pathways provide opportunities for students to participate in the design of their own personalized educational experiences.

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.



STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Enroll all students in untracked, heterogeneously grouped classes, and train all teachers in differentiated instruction and the use of formative assessment to identify and meet individual learning needs.</li><li>■ Leverage additional school resources—whether human, financial, material, instructional, or experiential—to help overcome the disadvantages of social background for underperforming, at-risk, and minority students, including pairing the most effective and experienced teachers with the most underprivileged students.</li><li>■ Remove barriers (such as prerequisites) that might prevent or discourage students from taking more challenging courses (including Advance Placement or International Baccalaureate options) or meeting basic admission requirements for college prior to graduation.</li><li>■ Create a coherent system of interventions to ensure that struggling students receive the academic and personal support they need to not only perform at grade level, but also to succeed in higher-level courses (e.g., Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment, co-curricular activities).</li><li>■ Regularly communicate with all parents—particularly parents from low-income or other disadvantaged households—while proactively encouraging their participation in school governance, activities, and programs.</li><li>■ Establish a school-wide system for monitoring student performance and socialization issues, and have guidance counselors work closely with teachers to provide practical and timely college and career guidance to all students.</li></ul>	
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ No significant achievement or aspiration gaps exist among students from different cultural, racial, ethnic, gender, socioeconomic, linguistic, or special-needs backgrounds.</li><li>■ Underperforming ninth-grade students are performing at or above grade level by the end of tenth grade.</li><li>■ Student participation in electives, higher-level courses, and co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities is consistent across all student subgroups.</li><li>■ College-enrollment rates are high, even among first-generation students from families with no college-going history.</li></ul>	
OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION	

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
Teachers use a limited repertoire of instructional strategies. Curriculum design and lesson planning reflect whole-group learning targets with little personalization or differentiation. The school is not organized to provide personalized learning or mitigate performance gaps, and teachers do not have timely access to data on individual student learning needs or progress. In-depth inquiry, student collaboration, and the application of real-world skills are absent from most courses and lessons.	The school's vision and mission have been revised to reflect a school-wide commitment to serving all students. Teachers are actively learning about personalization and differentiation. Most teachers have received professional development and support for using formative assessments, new learning technologies, and student-centered strategies that can help identify student needs and increase academic personalization. Courses are still fairly traditional, classroom-based experiences, but teachers are beginning to use instructional practices proven to engage diverse types of learners. The school has implemented an advisory structure for students, but both students and teachers report that the time is not being used effectively.	The faculty has made a bold public commitment to creating a student-centered culture and learning environment, and personalized instructional strategies designed to meet the intellectual, developmental, social, and emotional needs of every student reflect this commitment. Teachers regularly review student data to diagnose learning needs and improve instructional practice. The school has implemented systems (such as advisories) that help teachers get to know their students well. The school provides a variety of curriculum options, universal access to digital technologies, and multiple learning pathways both within and outside of the classroom. Students take a proactive role in designing their own education and planning for future learning. By using personal learning plans, portfolios, rubrics, online course-management tools, or other strategies, teachers help students manage their own educational experience. Teachers and school leaders regularly communicate with parents, encourage their involvement in the academic life of their children, and use Web-based tools to ensure that parents are knowledgeable about their children's academic progress. Classroom instruction emphasizes real-world concepts and applications, including hands-on learning, problem solving, research, technological literacy, and current national and international issues.

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.



STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Ensure that all courses, syllabi, lessons, and instructional strategies are developmentally appropriate and informed by educational and cognitive research.</li><li>■ Disaggregate and analyze multiple sources of data to determine the needs of individual students and student subgroups.</li><li>■ Engage all students in co-designing challenging, long-term projects that culminate in a public exhibition. (In addition to more traditional research and writing projects, these can include community-based learning, service learning, internships, and other alternative-learning options.)</li><li>■ Conduct classroom observations on an ongoing basis and regularly analyze up-to-date information about the academic performance and socialization of individual students.</li><li>■ Provide professional development so all teachers can differentiate instruction and personalize learning.</li><li>■ Provide multiple pathways for students to meet learning standards, including extended learning opportunities (internships, community-based volunteerism, etc.), online courses, and dual enrollment experiences.</li></ul>	
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Student surveys and comments indicate a high degree of academic engagement, satisfaction with their teachers, and a strong desire to continue learning beyond high school.</li><li>■ A significant percentage of the student body participates in internships, volunteerism, and other community-based learning opportunities, and participation is consistent across all student subgroups.</li><li>■ Absences, expulsions, behavioral issues, and dropout rates are declining.</li><li>■ Course failures during the ninth and tenth grades have declined dramatically.</li></ul>	
OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION	

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>Students are often engaged in time-consuming, lower-skill activities that add relatively little tangible academic value to the school day. Course-enrollment patterns reveal that low-achieving students from disadvantaged households tend to be enrolled in less-challenging courses that are taught by new or less-qualified teachers. Most classroom-based assessments rely on multiple-choice questions that measure only content knowledge and basic skills. Teachers infrequently engage students in long-term projects, complex problem solving, and other tasks that require the application of knowledge and higher-level reasoning skills. Remedial courses deliver less-rigorous instruction at a slower pace, and underperforming students are not always given the additional time they need to catch up to their peers. Special-education students are often separated from their peers, and the stigma associated with this label tends to reinforce negative self-images of academic or personal potential.</p>	<p>The lowest academic tracks have been eliminated, and most students are enrolled in college-preparatory courses. Prerequisites for higher-level courses—including honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual-enrollment courses—have been removed so that any motivated student can access challenging learning experiences regardless of past academic performance. School leaders and teachers have reviewed the academic program and eliminated outdated or nonessential courses. Some teachers are collaborating to develop interdisciplinary courses that explore concepts from multiple perspectives, but these opportunities are not accessible to all students. Student data are analyzed to identify underachieving students, and teachers are investigating and using intervention strategies focused on learning acceleration (not remediation), but these support strategies are not yet integrated into regular courses and coursework.</p>	<p>The administration and faculty have developed a common definition of academic rigor that is based on real-world learning needs, including research on the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in demanding postsecondary-degree programs and globally competitive modern careers. A concise set of academic objectives has been clearly articulated for every course and communicated to every student. Most units and lessons are thematic, cross-curricular, and explicitly address “21<sup>st</sup> century skills,” such as finding and organizing information to solve problems, planning and conducting long-term investigations, analyzing and synthesizing data, applying knowledge and skills in new situations, self-monitoring and self-directing, communicating and writing well, and working independently and in teams. Students are given time to investigate ideas in depth, and all students are engaged in long-term projects, exhibitions, and other performance-based demonstrations of learning. A variety of instructional strategies allow students to learn at their own pace and in ways that work most effectively for them. Teachers utilize interactive instructional techniques and regularly collaborate on intensive projects.</p>

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.





## STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	SAMPLE EVIDENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ensure that course sequences are based on developmental learning progressions and are aligned across grades to eliminate content gaps and repetitions.</li> <li>■ Engage all students in intensive, long-term, in-depth lessons and projects, rather than content review or extended text-based activities.</li> <li>■ Treat all students as if they are college-bound: require every student to take a nationally recognized college-entrance exam (SAT, ACT), apply to at least one postsecondary-degree program, and complete the Common Application for Undergraduate Admission and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.</li> <li>■ Offer a college-planning program for parents that begins in the ninth grade, especially for parents from disadvantaged households, and provide a variety of workshops, materials, and assistance strategies to ensure these families have the information and practical guidance they need to encourage, support, and finance their children's postsecondary education.</li> <li>■ Engage community mentors and local experts to support students working on intensive, long-term projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Scores on standardized tests and local assessments are rising, particularly among traditionally underperforming student subgroups.</li> <li>■ The number of first-generation and low-income students enrolling in and completing postsecondary-degree programs has increased dramatically, and the percentage of graduates needing remedial coursework in college has decreased.</li> <li>■ A high percentage of students graduate with a strong set of demonstrated academic and real-world skills, as evidenced by college acceptances, scholarships, travel plans, grant awards, community-service awards, internship offers, or other recognitions and opportunities that are a direct extension of their high school work.</li> </ul>
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION

## STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Scores on standardized tests and local assessments are rising, particularly among traditionally underperforming student subgroups.</li> <li>■ The number of first-generation and low-income students enrolling in and completing postsecondary-degree programs has increased dramatically, and the percentage of graduates needing remedial coursework in college has decreased.</li> <li>■ A high percentage of students graduate with a strong set of demonstrated academic and real-world skills, as evidenced by college acceptances, scholarships, travel plans, grant awards, community-service awards, internship offers, or other recognitions and opportunities that are a direct extension of their high school work.</li> </ul>	

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
Some efforts have been made to align coursework with career and college-ready learning standards, but in practice many teachers continue to use lessons that are unaligned or outdated. The school uses a standardized credit system based on seat time, letter grades, number averaging, and other traditional practices to measure academic progress and determine readiness for graduation. There is a great deal of variation from classroom to classroom in grading practices and standards. Students are often unaware of learning expectations for courses and lessons, and they rarely receive descriptive feedback on assignments. High-stakes external assessments often unilaterally drive instruction and lesson design.	School-wide curricula and instruction have been aligned with common learning standards, but this effort has not been systematic or systemic. District and school leaders have engaged in conversations about adopting a true standards-based system, and the principal and teacher-leaders have visited schools that are using effective standards-based practices. Teachers are employing multiple formative assessment strategies in the classroom, and academic support is being provided to ensure that struggling students have learned material before they move on to the next lesson. Some departments have developed common rubrics to enhance the consistency of grading and reporting, but this practice has not been embraced by all teachers or institutionalized school-wide. In some cases, learning expectations remain unclear and many students are still unaware of their own learning strengths and weaknesses or which learning standards teachers are addressing.	The school has publicly committed to becoming a true standards-based learning community, and graduation policy has been modified to require all students to demonstrate mastery of learning standards and high levels of college and career readiness before receiving a diploma. The faculty has prioritized learning standards in every content area so that the most essential content, skills, and habits of mind are covered in depth before teachers move on to additional material and standards. Multiple assessments are used to determine that students have mastered what they have been taught, and underperforming students are provided with additional instructional time, academic support, and alternative learning options to ensure that they are able to learn and demonstrate achievement in ways that work best for them. All teachers use common scoring guides that provide detailed descriptions of required learning proficiencies at each developmental stage and expected level of performance.

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.



STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Use curriculum mapping to align coursework not only with state standards, but also with companion standards that address local needs, regional issues, college readiness, and preparation for globally competitive 21<sup>st</sup> century careers. Make completed curriculum maps and other course materials accessible online.</li><li>■ Develop a communication strategy and related materials that clearly describe the advantages and details of your standards-based system for prospective students, parents, colleges, and employers.</li><li>■ Engage the entire faculty in collaboratively creating common rubrics and assessments that promote greater coherence and comparability across grade levels and course curricula.</li><li>■ Require teachers to use the same reporting processes and online student-information system to centralize and streamline grading and reporting.</li><li>■ Utilize thematic, interdisciplinary instruction built around long-term investigative projects that require students to apply knowledge and solve complex, real-world problems.</li><li>■ Ensure that your school's standards-based reporting system can be readily translated to meet standard college-application requirements, including a GPA-conversion formula and materials that explain the standards-based reporting system to admissions personnel.</li></ul>	
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Student scores on standardized tests and assessments are rising, particularly among traditionally underperforming subgroups.</li><li>■ There are no significant performance gaps among students from different socioeconomic, cultural, or special-needs backgrounds.</li><li>■ College-remediation rates among recent graduates are low and college-persistence rates are high or rising.</li><li>■ Nearly all students are performing at or above grade level by the end of tenth grade.</li></ul>	
OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION	

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>The school primarily uses a “one-size-fits-all” approach to assessment, and most assessments employ fixed-response, selected-response, and multiple-choice questions that primarily measure recall. The assessment literacy of teachers is limited, and many are unaware of research-based assessment strategies or the impact that varied assessment strategies can have on student learning. When students struggle to demonstrate what they have learned, assessment practices seldom change when students are retested. Teacher feedback often lacks clear guidance that will help students recognize learning needs and progress toward proficiency. Student learning is assessed infrequently, and assessment data are rarely used to modify instructional strategies.</p>	<p>More teachers are employing multiple assessment strategies in the classroom, but these practices are unevenly applied across the school and only occasionally result in personalized instructional modifications. Faculties are supported in increasing their understanding of assessment design and in matching assessments to specified learning goals. The school has started using more innovative assessment strategies—including exhibitions and portfolios—but many student projects display a lack of academic rigor, sophistication, or intellectual curiosity. The school has provided a few professional development opportunities to improve faculty understanding of effective assessment design and how assessment strategies can also be a learning tool for teachers and students. Assessment data is being reviewed and analyzed sporadically to inform instructional practices.</p>	<p>The teaching faculty has embraced assessment as a critical component of the learning process. The school has created a coherent system of varied, curriculum-embedded assessments that are aligned with standards and designed to capture a broad range of student learning. Teachers have received training in using assessments to identify and respond to student learning needs and are skilled in the use of diagnostic assessment. Formative, performance-based assessment strategies are used in every classroom throughout the school year to identify emerging student needs so that teachers can modify instruction and coordinate support before students fall behind. Performance assessments and demonstrations of learning are challenging, relevant, and model real-life situations and applications. Learning expectations are clearly communicated to all students at the beginning of courses and lessons, and students understand the assessment methods used by teachers. Teachers provide specific, detailed, and timely oral and written feedback to students on their learning strengths and weaknesses. Students are provided with differentiated assessment opportunities, where appropriate, so that they have ample opportunity to exhibit learning using multiple approaches. Equitable assessment practices ensure that all students have the time, resources, and support they need to demonstrate proficiency.</p>

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.





STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Employ multiple assessment strategies and sources of evidence throughout the school year, including performance-based assessments, selected and constructed responses, questioning strategies, teacher observation, personal communication, self-assessments, student portfolios (including Web-based portfolios), and public exhibitions of student work. Based on these assessments, teachers provide meaningful, actionable feedback to students.</li><li>■ Ensure that formative and summative performance-based assessments utilize open-ended questions and multi-step problem solving that require students to analyze problems, apply knowledge, think critically, and write extensively.</li><li>■ Design assessment instruments and tasks so that all students have the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency, including English-language learners and students with special needs.</li><li>■ Evaluate assessments to prioritize depth over breadth and determine if assessments are designed to show how students have mastered essential knowledge, skills, and habits of mind.</li><li>■ Create opportunities for individual faculty members and professional learning groups to research proven assessment strategies, share best practices, and integrate them into practice.</li></ul>	
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The administrative team and faculty can cite critical student-performance data by content area, grade level, and student subgroup.</li><li>■ There are no significant performance gaps among students from different socioeconomic, cultural, or special-needs backgrounds.</li><li>■ Student exhibitions evidence high levels of creativity, innovation, intellectual sophistication, and applied skills.</li><li>■ Parents—particularly those from first-generation, low-income, and other disadvantaged households—are informed about their child's academic progress, understand the standards and methods of assessing mastery of standards, and are engaged in helping their children succeed academically.</li></ul>	
OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION	

### STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>Some teachers rely on outdated textbooks and learning materials that primarily espouse an American or Eurocentric point of view. The school only offers instruction in one or two European languages, and there are no alternative options for students interested in learning other world languages. History and social science courses focus primarily on the American experience and rarely explore the emerging global interconnectedness of societies and cultures. The school's vision and mission do not address international learning or multicultural awareness. Students and teachers have reported incidences of racial, ethnic, and religious slurs being used during or outside of school. English-language learners spend most of the day in separate classes, and students, parents, and community members from other countries are rarely invited to share their backgrounds and experiences with students.</p>	<p>School leaders and teachers recognize the importance of exposing students to global issues and perspectives, and the school's action plan outlines specific objectives for expanding international-learning opportunities for students. The school has added new world-language courses and is working to forge partnerships with regional high schools and local colleges to enhance world-language opportunities. The school offers programs designed to increase multicultural understanding among staff and students, but these opportunities are often elective, offered after normal school hours, or unconnected to curriculum and instruction. Teachers make efforts to recognize and honor the cultural diversity of their students, and lessons are often modified to include material relevant to the social and cultural backgrounds represented in the class. ELL students, immigrant families, well-traveled students, and leaders of local cultural institutions are occasionally invited to present their experiences in classes. Students increasingly participate in exchange programs, travel-abroad opportunities, volunteerism, internships, leadership programs, and other opportunities that expose them to different societies and cultures.</p>	<p>Enhancing student understanding of international issues and world cultures is not only an explicitly stated goal of the school, but school leaders and staff have made a concerted effort to incorporate international knowledge, cultural diversity, and global values into all programs and learning opportunities. Students have access to a variety of world-language learning options and experiences. International issues and perspectives are emphasized across the content areas and embedded in the curriculum and learning materials, particularly in world history, geography, anthropology, literature, art, culture, economics, politics, and current-event lessons. Humanities, history, and social studies courses go beyond "flags, fun, food, and festivals" to explore the global interconnectedness and interdependence of societies, cultures, and economies. Learning opportunities designed to foster a greater understanding of diverse cultures and belief systems are integrated into the school day and into co-curricular programs. Students, parents, and staff who are members of immigrant or minority groups are seen as valued community resources and are often called upon to share their expertise and experiences.</p>

### STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.





STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Recognize culturally important themes and events, particularly those that reflect the diversity and interests of the student body.</li><li>■ Increase world-language course offerings, and coordinate with other schools, colleges, or cultural institutions in the region to share world-language educators and resources, or to provide online and distance-learning courses in languages for which a full-time hire may be impractical or infeasible.</li><li>■ Emphasize challenging issues with global ramifications in science courses, such as climate change, biodiversity and ecosystem loss, fisheries depletion, deforestation, and food and water shortages.</li><li>■ Make use of visiting lecturers, service-learning projects, sister-school programs, student and faculty exchange programs, and virtual exchange programs to expose students to different cultures, increase multicultural understanding among students, and internationalize curriculum and instruction.</li><li>■ Ensure that courses and co-curricular programs address problems and challenges that result from racism, discrimination, ethnic conflict, and religious intolerance.</li></ul>	

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The number of students enrolling in and passing non-traditional Advanced Placement world-language courses (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Hebrew, and Arabic) has increased.</li><li>■ The engagement, performance, and co-curricular participation of the school's English-language learners have increased significantly, as has participation in school activities among immigrant or minority families.</li><li>■ There is no evidence of student violence, bullying, or behavioral issues stemming from racial, ethnic, cultural, or socioeconomic differences among students.</li><li>■ Student coursework and assessments demonstrate a strong understanding of local, national, and global issues.</li></ul>	

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>Access to computers and online resources is limited due to scheduling issues, and inadequate supply of computers, outdated hardware and software, or a lack of skilled technical support. The school is not wireless and persistent technical issues occasionally shut down or disable the network. The faculty does not use common online applications to plan, organize, and manage courses, or to track student data related to lessons, performance, and demographics. The school does not provide professional development in the use of new digital learning technologies, and some teachers remain uncomfortable using digital learning applications in the classroom. The school does not have a long-range technology plan.</p>	<p>The school has a computer lab equipped with new computers, a variety of learning software, and a full-time learning-technology specialist, but an insufficient supply of computers, scheduling issues, and other minor problems limit teacher and student access to technology. Teachers are growing increasingly skilled in using digital tools and applications, but these practices are often limited to online researching, word processing, emailing, and other basic strategies. A few teachers in the school are highly skilled in using technology to increase student engagement and performance, but the school does not provide structured opportunities for advanced practitioners to model instruction or share best practices with their colleagues. Most students take at least one general course in digital and online literacy prior to graduation, but the school does not offer courses in practical technology skills—such as computer programming, digital photography, or graphic design—and computer skills are only occasionally integrated into regular courses. A secure, stable network provides reliable connectivity throughout the school facility.</p>	<p>Technology use across the school is transformative, changing the way that teachers teach and students learn. The school is a one-to-one learning environment, and each student has a laptop computer that can be used throughout the school day and after school hours. Student learning extends beyond the classroom to include real-world tasks or communication with experts outside of the school. Teachers take advantage of course-management software, a common student-information system, open-source applications, and other digital tools to facilitate the planning, organization, and communication within and across courses. The faculty consciously promotes and models digital citizenship and online responsibility, including respect for intellectual property, appropriate documentation of online sources, and ethical conduct and safety in online social interactions. Learning technologies and online resources are used on a daily basis in most courses, and every teacher has developed strategies to effectively integrate digital tools into their pedagogy. Technology is used to engage students in sophisticated knowledge construction, complex problem solving, peer collaboration, and the virtual exploration of global issues, and every student is required to demonstrate a high level of technological literacy prior to graduation. A strategic, long-range technology plan takes into account emerging needs and increases technology resources over time.</p>

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.



**STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES**

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	SAMPLE EVIDENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Post all syllabi, assignments, and course materials online.</li> <li>■ Require students to maintain online portfolios of their work and use course-management software to stay informed about their courses and to communicate electronically with teachers and peers.</li> <li>■ Encourage teachers to create and publish online videos, podcasts, slideshows, blogs, and other digital resources that help students contextualize content, apply knowledge, and learn more effectively.</li> <li>■ Use videoconferencing, chatting, social-networking sites, and other online communication technologies to create virtual-exchange experiences that expose students to experts and peers across the country and around the world.</li> <li>■ Create and online “repository of best practices” to facilitate the sharing of professional literature, effective lessons, instructional materials, and teaching strategies across content areas and grade levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Student exhibitions display a sophisticated understanding of new learning technologies: e.g., students have created films, musical compositions, science experiments, and new software programs using digital tools.</li> <li>■ Students regularly participate in technology-based projects outside of the classroom, including high-tech internships, online entrepreneurship, and technical-support services for the school community and local organizations.</li> <li>■ Teachers have an in-depth understanding of student learning needs that would not have been possible without the aid of databases, online resources, and other digital applications that allow them to disaggregate data and communicate more effectively with students and parents.</li> </ul>
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>Teaching practice is largely individualistic and uninformed by current research, collegial feedback, formative assessments, or student data. Classroom doors are generally closed and faculty members rarely observe one another teaching or have focused discussions about specific instructional strategies or student needs. The administrative team is largely focused on managerial responsibilities, and only a limited amount of time is devoted to investigating proven best practices, analyzing student-performance trends, and participating in professional learning. School policies do not explicitly support ongoing professional learning, and teacher schedules and workloads do not provide time for collaborative work and study. Some tensions among the faculty may go unresolved for long periods of time.</p>	<p>Teacher interactions indicate that there is a growing sense of trust, appreciation, and mutual respect for one another's contributions to the school community. Several teachers have been trained to facilitate professional sharing among teachers, and a significant percentage of the teaching faculty meets every month to discuss student work and instructional strategies. The administrative team has taken steps to stay informed about current research, analyze student data, distribute best-practice literature to the faculty, and support the ongoing professional learning of every teacher. Time for collaborative preparation and planning is provided to teachers during the school day, but this time is often unstructured, loosely facilitated, or unproductive in terms of improving classroom instruction across the school.</p>	<p>Faculty interactions are characterized by the kind of collegiality, trust, and respect that result from strong personal relationships, professionalism, and mutual appreciation. Teachers regularly observe one another's practice and provide constructive feedback that is based on a shared understanding of effective teaching, learning goals, and student needs. The faculty has developed a "shared language" for discussing instruction, assessment, and other critical elements of teaching and learning. All teachers are involved in consistent, group-based professional conversations that are well established, organized, skillfully facilitated, and goal-driven. Group agendas and conversations focus on addressing the specific tasks and strategies of student-centered, inquiry-based teaching and assessment. Faculty meetings are characterized by enthusiasm, intellectual curiosity, and a sense of collective responsibility for improving student learning and outcomes, particularly among traditionally underperforming student subgroups.</p>

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.





## STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Create a professional development program that balances graduate courses, external workshops, conferences, and school visits with job-embedded professional learning, including mentoring, instructional coaching, classroom observation, data analysis, and professional learning groups.</li> <li>■ Create a centralized online repository of research, best-practice literature, rubrics, scoring guides, curriculum maps, and effective lesson plans that can facilitate sharing and ongoing professional learning.</li> <li>■ Develop a "shared language" among the faculty for discussing instruction, assessment, and other essential elements of teaching and learning.</li> <li>■ Require all teachers to participate in a structured professional learning group that meets at least once a month for two hours or longer. Ensure that these sessions are well facilitated and follow a purposeful agenda focused on instructional improvement and student performance.</li> <li>■ Create time in the schedule for professional learning groups to meet regularly during the school day.</li> </ul>	<p>OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION</p>

## STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Interdisciplinary collaboration and team teaching are common, and teachers are knowledgeable about the learning expectations of their colleagues' content areas and the instructional practices they use.</li> <li>■ The school has lower dropout rates, reduced absenteeism, and fewer behavioral issues.</li> <li>■ Teachers report a more positive view of their students' abilities, more enthusiasm for teaching, more rewarding interactions with colleagues, and a stronger desire to continue learning and developing their own skills.</li> <li>■ Teachers are not only attending more conferences and other local or national learning opportunities, but they are also submitting proposals to lead presentations or facilitate workshops.</li> </ul>	<p>OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION</p>

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>The school has a public vision and mission, but these statements have not been reviewed for many years and no longer reflect the needs of the current student body or the values and contributions of the current staff. The school's improvement plan does not represent a collective commitment or reflect the expressed values of the school community. State and federal funds for school improvement and professional development often go underutilized or unused. Many major decisions appear to contradict the school's mission statement, but faculty, students, and parents rarely discuss these inconsistencies. Teaching, assessment, and reporting practices are inconsistent across grade levels, departments, and classrooms.</p>	<p>The school has collaboratively developed a public vision and mission that reflects the contributions and values of diverse stakeholders in the school community, although some staff members and parents remain critical of the school's new direction. Despite broad-based participation in its development, the action plan tends to reflect the personal interests and desires of a few strong voices. School leaders have discussed the action plan with all staff members and some community leaders. These communication efforts have increased support among parents, the public, and the local media. The principal has presented the school's action plan to the school board and received general approval of its goals and strategies. Major decisions are increasingly aligned with the school's vision, mission, and action plan, and instructional practices are being modified to reflect the school's stated goals and values.</p>	<p>In collaboration with staff, students, parents, community members, and local policy makers, the school has created a bold, student-centered, long-term vision for ongoing school improvement and professional growth. The mission and vision statements express a unified value system that is based on personalizing teaching and learning, promoting common high expectations, cultivating student aspirations and ambitions, and nurturing the holistic development and wellness of every student. The language of the vision and mission is clear, understandable, and powerful, and it exemplifies the shared principles and ideals of the school community. These statements have been formally endorsed by the school board, local policy makers, and business and community leaders. The vision and mission are used to guide all budgetary, staffing, and instructional decisions, and to shape annual action plans. The action plan and all relevant documents are publicly available online, and school and community stakeholders are familiar with its major goals and strategies.</p>

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.





## STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Invite a broad representation of school and community stakeholders to collectively develop a vision and mission that are ambitious but feasible, and based on proven, research-based strategies.</li> <li>■ Have school leaders and teachers, in collaboration with a school coach or colleagues from other schools, meet for several days during the summer to revise the school's action plan for the coming year based on an extensive review of quantitative and qualitative data from the previous year.</li> <li>■ Utilize online applications to track progress on action-plan objectives and to enhance transparency, accountability, and communication among staff members involved in implementing the action plan.</li> <li>■ Align supervision, evaluation, and hiring procedures with the school's vision, mission, and school-improvement plan.</li> <li>■ Establish trusting relationships with local editors, journalists, and producers, and proactively communicate with the media when either difficult issues or success stories arise.</li> </ul>	<p>OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION</p>

## STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ All students demonstrate consistently high achievement regardless of their gender, cultural background, socioeconomic status, or special needs.</li> <li>■ The community embraces the school's mission, values, and action plan, as evidenced in surveys of parents and other stakeholders.</li> <li>■ Local media outlets regularly run stories on the school's improvement work and profile student success stories.</li> <li>■ The school board, state representatives, and business and community leaders are informed about the school and publicly supportive of its goals.</li> </ul>	<p>OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION</p>

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
Some efforts have been made by school leaders to energize the staff, but general morale and motivation remain low. Adult interactions occasionally lapse into complaints, gossip, and other negative commentary about students, colleagues, or the school itself. Teachers unevenly enforce rules about student behavior, and persistent classroom-management issues too often become the focus of teacher attention and disrupt learning for students. Students have few opportunities to participate in school governance, and parents and community members infrequently or unevenly participate in school programs and events. Co-curricular and extracurricular activities do not engage students from a variety of backgrounds, and exclusionary cliques are common across the student body. Staff, students, and parents occasionally report incidences of bullying and derogatory language by students.	The school has formal procedures that allow students, staff, and parents to voice concerns directly to the administrative and leadership teams. Innovation and risk-taking by teachers are accepted, although it is seldom encouraged or expected by school leaders. Improved collegial relationships are having a noticeable impact on staff motivation and morale. Administrators and teachers have developed a communication plan that is helping to keep parents and community members informed about the school and engaged in its activities. Student behavioral issues tend to be minor, and there is little evidence of bullying or harassment by students. Students from diverse backgrounds participate in co-curricular and extracurricular activities, but the same handful of students tend to assume leadership roles.	The school's commitment to equity is not just proclaimed in its mission statement, but is evident in every program, course, and interaction. Adults in the school do not make unconstructive critical statements about students, colleagues, or the school itself. School leaders and faculty encourage innovation, risk-taking, and professionalism in the classroom, and effective teaching is recognized and rewarded. The school community has collaboratively created and endorsed a system of shared beliefs, traditions, and practices that celebrate positive values and encourage a safe and inclusive school environment. The entire faculty feels individually and collectively responsible for the academic success, personal growth, and well-being of every student. Students feel a sense of pride in their school and ownership over their learning. Students from diverse social and cultural backgrounds are active in school governance and serve as leaders in co-curricular and extracurricular activities. Administrators and faculty actively attempt to resolve any tensions or problems that may arise. Co-curricular programs and course-embedded lessons address diversity awareness and the importance of cultural sensitivity, and students are encouraged to explore and question their own beliefs about race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability. School leaders and staff do not tolerate hurtful language, prejudicial behavior, or the perpetuation of false stereotypes about other people and cultures. Student successes both in and outside of the classroom are publicly celebrated.

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.



STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Ensure that all teachers intentionally model positive behaviors and actively promote positive student self-images of academic ability, future aspirations, and personal potential in the classroom.</li><li>■ Hold open community forums in which school leaders candidly discuss school matters, and in which participants—students, parents, community members—are encouraged to speak up and raise concerns.</li><li>■ Use agendas, protocols, norms, and other strategies to ensure that staff meetings are well organized, efficiently run, and focused on improving instructional quality, collegial relationships, and the student experience—not just administrative issues.</li><li>■ Make special efforts to reach out to and involve historically disengaged parents in school activities.</li><li>■ Encourage students to assume leadership roles and help promote a positive school culture.</li></ul>	

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Teachers, students, and parents are informed about school plans and activities, and student and parent participation in school decisions and activities is increasing.</li><li>■ Extreme competitive behavior among students is not evident in the classroom, in communal spaces, or on the athletic field.</li><li>■ More students are arriving early and staying late to meet with teachers and take advantage of learning opportunities.</li><li>■ Discipline referrals have decreased and attendance rates are above 95%. Major student problems—such as depression, drug abuse, and suicide—are extremely rare.</li></ul>	

## STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>The curriculum is a series of classroom-based courses culminating in a high school diploma, and students infrequently engage in learning experiences outside the classroom. Interdisciplinary collaboration is rare, and teachers infrequently use strategies to make content more relevant or to connect students with local issues, leaders, organizations, and opportunities. Student choice is primarily limited to course selection, and most courses do not integrate personalization strategies that address different learning styles and needs. The school has not taken steps to develop partnerships with local businesses or collegiate institutions, and it does not have established internship or dual enrollment programs. Technical education is entirely separate from the academic program. Students are given few opportunities to earn academic credit outside of classroom-based courses.</p>	<p>Multiple course options are available, although course content and sequences are largely predetermined and learning expectations are applied unevenly. Most courses are still taught in traditional classrooms, but teachers are gradually redefining their conceptions of what an effective learning environment can or should be. Online credit-recovery provides students who have failed one or more courses with alternative learning options that allow them to catch up to their peers and graduate on time. The school is responsive when students propose alternative pathways to meeting graduation requirements, but the faculty has not developed a system to encourage innovative, student-designed projects. Teachers in the academic program are beginning to collaborate with educators from the local technical program, and several integrated courses expose students to rigorous academic content while giving them the opportunity to develop applied skills. Partnerships with local business and collegiate institutions have led to the development of new internship and dual enrollment programs, but only a small number of students are taking advantage of these opportunities.</p>	<p>The school and faculty have adopted a general pedagogical philosophy that teaching strategies, learning environments, and time can be variable, but learning standards will remain constant. The school provides a variety of learning pathways to every student—including classroom-embedded, co-curricular, and outside-of-school pathways—that accommodate different learning styles while applying the same universally high academic expectations. Students are encouraged to take an active role in planning their own education, and opportunities to propose and co-design additional projects or courses of study are provided. Access to and participation in alternative learning options is consistent across all student subgroups, and all pathways prepare students for success in college and globally competitive modern careers. The school's career and technical education program is integrated into and aligned with the school's academic program, and students are encouraged to select courses from both programs. Vibrant internship and dual enrollment programs enroll a significant percentage of the student body.</p>

## STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.





STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Develop strategic partnerships that provide the kind of intellectually rigorous courses and programs that prepare students for college and technology-driven, 21<sup>st</sup> century workplaces (e.g., career and technical centers, community-based education programs, institutions of higher education, etc.).</li><li>■ Forge partnerships with local or state colleges and universities to develop dual-enrollment programs for eleventh- and twelfth-grade students.</li><li>■ Create curriculum-integrated, career-based programs—such as apprenticeships, internships, or job-shadowing—that enhance student understanding of career paths and strengthen school, community, and local business connections.</li><li>■ Develop new graduation policies that provide more flexibility in meeting learning standards (e.g., a policy that requires students to complete a service-learning project before graduation).</li><li>■ Monitor and track student engagement and dropout rates, and interview dropouts to determine the primary reasons why they left school.</li><li>■ Develop alternative programs and adult-education pathways for dropouts to earn a high school diploma.</li></ul>	
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Attendance, graduation, college-enrollment, and internship-participation rates have increased dramatically, and dropout rates are low and decreasing.</li><li>■ A broad variety of students—including higher- and lower-performing students, male and female students, and students from higher- and lower-income households—take advantage of the school's career and technical programs.</li><li>■ A significant number of students are graduating with transferable college credits and postsecondary certifications.</li><li>■ Follow-up surveys indicate that dropouts have returned to school or completed an adult-education program.</li></ul>	
OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION	

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
Teachers have little information about the learning needs of incoming students, and the school has not developed a strategy for keeping parents informed about and involved in their children's education. Teachers rarely communicate student-learning needs across grade levels, and academic course progressions are not always articulated or aligned from one grade to the next. The school does not receive student data from its sending schools. Although individual teachers take a personal interest in their students' development, there is no systemic strategy for helping teachers identify student needs as they transition into high school or progress from grade to grade. The school has little information on student outcomes following graduation, such as data on college enrollment, remediation, and persistence rates.	Better communication with sending and receiving schools is beginning to occur, but these strategies tend to focus on administrative or logistical issues, not data exchange or student needs. The curriculum in most courses is aligned with collegiate expectations, although some students continue to be enrolled in courses that do not result in true college-ready preparation. The school has created an advisory structure that pairs every incoming student with at least one adult in the school, but the purpose of the program has not been clearly articulated and some advisories tend to be disorganized or unfocused. The school offers a variety of extended learning options, internships, and college-preparation programs to juniors and seniors, but these opportunities are largely being utilized by historically high-performing students from more advantaged households. The school tracks information on graduates, but rarely analyzes it to improve programs and support strategies for current students.	School leaders and teachers have established strong connections between sending and receiving schools that focus on both programmatic alignment and student-needs issues. Teachers at different grade levels routinely discuss individual student learning needs—particularly for academically struggling students—from disadvantaged backgrounds—and school structures ensure that every student is known well by at least one adult in the school. Courses and curricula have been articulated across grade levels, and with sending middle schools and postsecondary expectations, to mitigate content gaps and ensure a seamless continuum of learning. Teachers are knowledgeable about all content-area expectations and grade-level standards, particularly the specific standards for students transitioning into and out of their grade level. The school gathers and analyzes postsecondary data on their graduates and uses that information to improve postsecondary-planning programs and support systems.

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.



STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Implement teaming (students paired with a consistent group of teachers) during the ninth and tenth grades to increase personalization and enhance teacher understanding of individual learning needs.</li><li>■ Align all learning expectations, curriculum, and instruction with the school's primary sending middle schools so that entering ninth-grade students are equipped with the skills needed to succeed.</li><li>■ Create a well-coordinated dual-enrollment program that allows students to take college courses for both high school and college credit, and that provides on-campus learning experiences and exposure to collegiate life.</li><li>■ Beginning in the ninth grade, offer a comprehensive college- and career-planning program to all students and parents that is focused on practical guidance, including selecting a degree program, filling out applications, applying for financial aid, budgeting for college expenses, writing a resume, and interviewing well.</li><li>■ Adopt a graduation policy that requires students to apply to at least one postsecondary-degree program and to complete the Common Application for Undergraduate Admissions and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.</li></ul>	

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Course failures, absences, behavioral issues, and dropout rates are low or decreasing among ninth- and tenth-grade students.</li><li>■ College enrollment and persistence rates—particularly among first-generation, minority, and immigrant families—are rising significantly each year.</li><li>■ A significant percentage of juniors and seniors are participating in summer learning programs, internships, peer tutoring, dual-enrollment courses, volunteerism, political campaigns, social-change activism, and other experiences that develop leadership skills, maturity, active citizenship, and preparation for postsecondary learning and adult life.</li><li>■ The number of students taking standardized college-entrance exams, such as the SAT, ACT, and Accuplacer is increasing, particularly among student subgroups that have not historically aspired to a collegiate education.</li></ul>	

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
Interventions and support strategies are only offered occasionally outside of regular courses and school hours. When available, academic support is not integrated with regular courses and primarily consists of repeating material at a slower pace using the same general instructional strategies employed in regular classes. Special education is a separate academic track, and students enrolled in this program not only spend a great deal of time isolated from their peers, but they experience social stigma related to the label. Detailed data on absenteeism, behavioral incidences, and course failures are not consistently tracked or regularly analyzed to identify potential at-risk or underperforming students who may be in danger of failing or dropping out. School disciplinary policies lead to suspensions and other measures, compounding learning deficits for many students.	Intervention and support strategies are available to all students, but they are rarely evaluated for effectiveness or modified from year to year in response to fluctuations in student performance or needs. Academic support is viewed as an “add on,” not as an essential component of effective teaching and learning that should be integrated into courses to accelerate learning for all students. Academic-support personnel receive little professional development, rarely coordinate with classroom teachers, and often employ the same instructional strategies that proved ineffective in regular courses. The school is taking steps to develop a comprehensive intervention system, but support strategies are not systemic, remain insufficiently challenging, and are provided too late in the school year to have a meaningful influence on performance.	All teachers in the school take professional responsibility for student outcomes, including course failures and low aspirations, and the school's accountability and support systems ensure that all students receive the personalized interventions and instructional time they need to achieve high learning standards. Teachers across content areas regularly discuss the learning needs of their shared students, while co-developing personalized support strategies for struggling and at-risk students. Academic support is focused on acceleration, not traditional remediation, and strategies are regularly evaluated to determine if student outcomes are improving. All students—both high-performing and low-performing—are engaged in some form of individualized academic acceleration, which has reduced the negative self-images and stigma typically associated with support options. Incoming ninth-graders are pre-assessed to determine learning needs, and interventions are provided at the first indication that a student is falling behind.

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.



## STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use “early warning” strategies such as formative assessment, student-led conferences, and advisories to help identify academically struggling and at-risk students before they fall too far behind or drop out.</li> <li>■ Develop a comprehensive intervention system that utilizes a variety of integrated, mutually reinforcing support strategies, including after-school programs, summer school, co-teaching, peer tutoring, companion and bridge classes, and course-embedded supplemental instruction.</li> <li>■ Ensure that academic-support and extended-learning options are highly inclusive, offered to all students, integrated into all courses, and available to both low-performing and high-performing students, including independent studies and honors challenges.</li> <li>■ Provide all teachers with professional development focused on classroom-embedded support, personalized learning, and academic acceleration.</li> <li>■ Have skilled support staff—literacy coaches, special education teachers, guidance counselors, technology specialists—work closely with teachers to coordinate and enhance the quality of student interventions.</li> <li>■ Provide regularly scheduled planning time for the classroom teachers and interventionists supporting common students.</li> </ul>	<p>OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION</p>

## STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Academic support is no longer stigmatized within the school community, but is viewed as a positive, essential component of the learning experience.</li> <li>■ Nearly all students are performing at or above grade level by the end of tenth grade.</li> <li>■ Graduation and college-going rates have increased significantly among traditionally underperforming subgroups.</li> </ul>	<p>OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION</p>

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>The instructional strategies employed by teachers are often hampered by time constraints and generally emphasize content coverage rather than depth of student learning. The school calendar, daily schedule, and other important information are not consistently updated or publicly available online for students and parents. School facilities are generally closed to the public on evenings, weekends, and during the summer, and few community organizations use the school for meetings, events, or programs. Outside of lockers, students are not given personal space, such as reading nooks or workstations. The majority of seniors attend school for only a few hours each day, and many of these students do not use this extra time to increase their readiness for college, work, or adult life.</p>	<p>Teachers have discussed how learning spaces and time can be used more efficiently or effectively, and the majority of teachers are making efforts to incorporate proven practices that make better use of instructional time. The school, however, has not adopted formal policies to support these innovations. School facilities are being used more frequently for community activities and extended learning programs, but these opportunities are rarely integrated with the school's academic program and student participation is sporadic. Extended school hours, a year-round calendar, and other flexible scheduling approaches are starting to be employed.</p>	<p>All teachers ensure that lessons and pedagogy are being refined to make efficient and effective use of instructional time. Learning time is varied, enabling students to master skills and gain knowledge based on their unique learning needs rather than an inflexible common schedule. The school has redesigned its facilities and space to ensure that they are conducive to learning, and administrators have identified and prioritized needed improvements and upgrades. The school has made concerted efforts to become a learning center for the community, and school facilities are frequently utilized after normal school hours and on weekends throughout the year. The weekly school schedule includes time for professional sharing, collaborative lesson planning, and professional development for all teachers. School leaders have investigated developmentally appropriate class-scheduling strategies, longer blocks of time, extended school days, off-campus learning, and other flexible scheduling strategies that can empower teachers and students to work and learn more creatively. The school has taken steps to create flexible, multipurpose learning spaces that can be used in a variety of innovative and non-traditional ways by both students and teachers.</p>

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.





STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Conduct a "time audit" to identify trends and patterns in how instructional time is being used in every course.</li><li>■ Restructure teacher schedules and workloads to increase the amount of time teachers devote to collaborative planning, preparing lessons, curriculum design, evaluating student work, professional learning groups, data analysis, instructional refinement, professional development, meeting with students and parents, and other responsibilities related to improving pedagogical effectiveness (in some high-performing countries, for example, teachers often spend less than 50% of their work time in the classroom).</li><li>■ Publish a master schedule online so every member of the community can access information about all school and community events for the year.</li><li>■ Involve students in planning the use of existing school facilities and any proposed expansions, including projects to develop environmentally sustainable practices and test the facility for environmental contamination.</li><li>■ Prioritize all structural improvements, equipment purchases, and staffing decisions to ensure that student-learning needs are met first.</li></ul>	
OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION	

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ More students and teachers are arriving at school early or staying late to take advantage of school resources and learning opportunities.</li><li>■ Parent involvement in school activities, fundraisers, and volunteer opportunities has increased, particularly among low-income, first-generation, and immigrant families.</li><li>■ Community members and business leaders regularly provide expertise, services, and personal time to the school.</li><li>■ The school facility is increasingly used during evenings and weekends to host adult education programs, community celebrations, and public forums.</li></ul>	
OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION	

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>Annual student data are made available to school leaders and teachers, but it is often too late in the year to guide action plans, curriculum modifications, or professional development. The school uses a largely paper-based system for tracking and analyzing student data, and information is stored in different files and locations, making it difficult to access and organize. Frequent errors are uncovered in school and student data—even in state and federal reporting—and responsibilities for collecting and reporting data are not clearly defined. Teachers are unskilled in using data to identify student learning needs, and instruction is often predetermined and standardized even in courses that include a mix of student learning styles, performance histories, grade levels, or cultural backgrounds.</p>	<p>The school has developed a defined process for collecting, archiving, tracking, and analyzing student data that uses computers, databases, and other relevant digital applications for storing, retrieving, and analyzing data. Although the school has converted to a centralized data system, historical data remain disorganized and have not yet been entered into the new system. Data is regularly shared with the staff, but it is often confusing or misunderstood and only occasionally leads to changes in organizational design or instructional practice. School leaders have recruited skilled staff members and teachers to ensure the integrity, reliability, and utility of the school's data system. All teachers use data systems for grading and reporting, but many teachers are not yet using data diagnostically to improve instruction and personalize learning for students.</p>	<p>Current and historical student data are an integral part of the school's decision-making process and academic program. The faculty is trained in how to use data to guide program improvements and help personalize instruction for all students. The school has a data-collection system in place that allows the faculty to look beyond test results and general percentages to identify institutional strengths and weaknesses, as well as patterns of performance across courses, content areas, grade levels, student subgroups, and individual students. The school has clearly defined performance objectives, and student data are tracked and reviewed to determine progress made toward achieving long-term goals. Professional learning groups regularly use disaggregated student data to guide their own professional growth, and teachers regularly make data-informed instructional modifications intended to address the identified needs of their students. Parents have online access to essential information and updates about their child's education. A thoughtful communication strategy utilizes online technologies to keep parents, local policy makers, and the public apprised of school-performance data and ongoing efforts to improve student outcomes.</p>

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.





## STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Make use of a common student-information system and other technological tools to track, disaggregate, and analyze student data (include data required for state and federal reporting, but also data that can help identify priority areas for instructional improvement, such as course failures, intervention outcomes, and postsecondary success data).</li> <li>■ Provide parents with online access to up-to-the-minute information on the academic status of their children, including information about current and upcoming assignments.</li> <li>■ Use the National Student Clearinghouse's StudentTracker for High Schools system to track the college-enrollment and -persistence rates of all graduates.</li> <li>■ Undertake a comprehensive data review at the end of each year to identify specific strengths and weaknesses that can shape the coming year's action plan.</li> <li>■ Conduct confidential surveys of students, parents, and teachers to collect data on school culture, teacher effectiveness, and other important issues.</li> <li>■ Utilize professional learning groups and other school-embedded professional development structures to ensure that teachers understand the importance of analyzing data, and have time to disaggregate student data, discuss their findings with colleagues, and determine research-based solutions to improve classroom practice.</li> </ul>	

## STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Regular upgrades in data technology and ongoing refinement of the data-collection process are increasing efficiency and minimizing errors.</li> <li>■ Surveys of the faculty indicate that data is used to guide both programmatic and instructional decisions.</li> <li>■ Historically disengaged parents are more informed about their children's academic progress and are taking a more active role in their children's education.</li> <li>■ Discussions about student data at the faculty and community levels are aligned with the school mission and action plan, and are focused on addressing identified student needs.</li> </ul>	

## STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
Supervision and accountability procedures are largely top-down and teachers view efforts to evaluate their practice primarily in terms of job security, not professional improvement. Professional development opportunities are randomly selected, sporadically offered, and unconnected to a coherent plan for ongoing, school-wide improvement. Very little common-planning or preparation time is built into the school schedule for teachers, and faculty members rarely collaborate on curriculum design and interdisciplinary lessons. The school offers late-start and early release days, but many teachers use these opportunities to catch up on personal work or deal with short-term logistical issues. Funding streams are generally disconnected and available resources are not used to support a strategic, long-term school-improvement plan.	The school has an action plan that is reviewed and revised annually, but it is somewhat confusing, cumbersome, and overly ambitious. The faculty has developed academic-improvement goals, but these goals are general and not specific to content areas or student subgroups. Teachers are energized to improve instruction and learning opportunities for students, although new ideas and initiatives are often introduced haphazardly, resulting in some inefficiencies, confusion, and burdensome workloads. Teachers are beginning to see themselves as knowledge workers, and a culture of professional inquiry, self-reflection, and evidence-based teaching is emerging. Some teachers are participating in self-designed study groups, but the school has not yet offered the training and support necessary to institutionalize professional learning groups across the school. Teachers regularly participate in conferences and seminars, yet school leaders have not developed a coherent professional-development plan that is based on academic goals and identified student-learning needs.	The school's action plan is ambitious, but achievable, and focused on a relatively limited number of targeted, high-priority goals each year. School-wide academic-improvement goals are based on identified programmatic or instructional weaknesses, and specific goals have been set for content areas and student subgroups. The action plan is driven by multiple measures—not just standardized assessment results—including student-level data and community demographics. School goals are clearly and regularly communicated to the school community. Progress toward achieving action-plan objectives is monitored throughout the school year, and transparency, collaboration, and consistent communication ensure accountability to the vision and objectives of the action plan. Disaggregated student data and assessment results are used to inform strategic planning and professional development, and the impact of professional learning is continually monitored using teacher surveys, assessment trends, and other data. Teachers view themselves not as employees or passive recipients of professional development, but as a community of leaders, knowledge producers, and student mentors. The school budget, grant funding, and other resources support the priorities and actions outlined in the school's improvement plan.

## STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.





## STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provide teachers with time for classroom observation, common planning, and other collaborative strategies intended to improving instructional quality.</li> <li>■ Ensure that professional development addresses the characteristics of effective instructional improvement identified by research: (1) create awareness of weaknesses in individual practice; (2) provide precise knowledge of best practice; and (3) motivate teachers to improve.</li> <li>■ Foster a pedagogical culture of research and inquiry in which teachers regularly review, discuss, and act upon the latest educational, instructional, developmental, and cognitive research.</li> <li>■ Examine collective bargaining agreements and look for ways to offer incentives (e.g., public recognition, sabbaticals, subsidized graduate study, professional advancement, etc.) to encourage teachers to improve classroom practice.</li> <li>■ Appoint expert mentor teachers trained in facilitation skills, coaching techniques, and instructional modeling to help new or struggling teachers.</li> <li>■ Contract a long-term school coach—i.e., a skilled facilitator and school-improvement strategist who develops trusting relationships and a strong understanding of the school and its needs—to help guide the school-improvement work.</li> </ul>	

## STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ten percent of teacher work time (or more than a hundred hours a year) is devoted to professional development, including professional learning groups, instructional coaching, and other forms of school-embedded learning.</li> <li>■ At least ten percent of district or school budgets are devoted to providing professional development designed to improve instructional quality.</li> <li>■ Teacher surveys indicate that improvement strategies are regularly discussed with colleagues, mentor teachers, and school coaches, and a culture of cooperation, collegial, and professionalism is evident among the staff.</li> <li>■ Classroom observations are used to improve practice and not simply for annual performance evaluations.</li> </ul>	

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>Administrators select new teaching hires with little input from staff members, students, parents, and other stakeholders in the community. Teacher performance is not considered in the annual evaluation process, and disparities in student outcomes across courses are not investigated, discussed, or understood. New teachers receive little formal professional support, and the official guidance they receive is primarily focused on procedural issues, not instructional improvement. The school has a difficult time retaining experienced or motivated faculty, which has resulted in high turnover rates and persistent inconsistencies in programs and standards. Nearly all teacher time is spent in the classroom, and interdisciplinary collaboration is rare. The school does not have a formal professional-development program, and when professional-development opportunities are provided they are not aligned with the school's vision, mission, action plan, or identified staff needs.</p>	<p>Teachers contribute to the hiring process, including participation on interview committees, although the school tends to hire the most qualified candidates without sufficiently considering whether their background, personality, motivation level, and other factors are a good fit for the school community or its student needs. The school's induction process creates a welcoming environment for new hires by pairing new, less-experienced faculty with a veteran mentor teacher who provides regular guidance throughout the first year. After the initial induction period, structured opportunities for ongoing instructional coaching, professional learning, collaboration, and career growth taper off significantly.</p>	<p>The school has a rigorous, multi-stage teacher-selection process that has been collaboratively developed with input from staff, students, and representative stakeholders within the school community. Every prospective teacher is evaluated against a clear, concise teacher profile that is aligned with the school mission and that outlines expectations for content knowledge, pedagogical skill, professional conduct, ongoing learning, and other essential attributes of highly effective teaching. Background, personality, motivation level, and other critical job-performance factors are considered during the hiring process to help ensure that new teachers are not only qualified, but a good fit for the school community and its needs. Beginning teachers are paired with an experienced mentor teacher who provides regular support, guidance, and in-class instructional modeling during the first two to three years of practice. Supervision and evaluation procedures are differentiated to accommodate the strengths and needs of teachers at different stages of their careers. Thoughtful professional-advancement and performance-recognition procedures motivate teachers to increase their professional expertise, pursue advanced degrees, assume leadership roles, and make valuable contributions to the school community.</p>

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.





## STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Recruit new teachers and administrators who graduated in the top 10%-25% of their class, and offer competitive entry-level salaries and other incentives to top candidates.</li> <li>■ Develop rigorous criteria and a multistage selection process for new hires that involves diverse representation from across the school community.</li> <li>■ Look for faculty candidates that embody the qualities of effective teachers as identified by international research: (1) strong literacy and numeracy skills, (2) strong communication and interpersonal skills, (3) a willingness to learn and grow as a professional, and (4) a strong desire and motivation to teach.</li> <li>■ Examine traditional collective bargaining agreements and salary scales and look for ways to restructure these processes to encourage teacher leadership, increase scholarly activities, and focus professional growth on improved student learning.</li> <li>■ Create at least a three-year probationary vetting period for new hires—during which their teaching skills are observed and teaching assignments are different than those of veteran teachers—before offering a permanent position.</li> <li>■ Provide new teachers with ongoing mentoring, practical-skill coaching, guided practice, and extra professional development during their first three to five years of teaching, and select mentor teachers and instructional specialists based on their proven record of effective teaching and coaching.</li> </ul>	<p>OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION</p>

## STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The faculty is composed of teachers from a broad range of backgrounds that bring varied professional skills, talents, and experiences to the classroom.</li> <li>■ Active engagement in professional learning has increased conference attendance, the pursuit of more advanced degrees, and other indicators of improved professional motivation among the faculty.</li> <li>■ Faculty turnover is low or decreasing.</li> <li>■ Faculty surveys reflect high or increasing levels of job satisfaction.</li> </ul>	<p>OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION</p>

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>School administrators are primarily focused on budgetary, building, and behavioral management, and relatively little of their time is devoted to instructional leadership. Major decisions are made by the superintendent or principal with little input from staff or students, and these decisions often seem random or unconsidered to many members of the school community. The principal has not clearly articulated his or her vision for the school or its academic program, and many administrative decisions are not aligned with the school's stated learning goals, action plan, or identified student needs. The principal is largely uninformed about the instructional practices being used throughout the school, and has not made professional development a school or budgetary priority.</p>	<p>The principal's vision for the school has energized some faculty members and stakeholders, but a few outspoken faculty, student, and parent voices remain opposed to the new direction. Despite good intentions, building-management and budgetary issues continue to absorb a significant amount of the principal's time, which has diminished his or her ability to take a stronger leadership role in improving instructional quality throughout the school. The principal and other administrators regularly praise and encourage the teaching staff, but they display little actual knowledge about or understanding of the teaching and learning taking place throughout the school on a daily basis. The principal recognizes that a good leader empowers others to assume leadership roles and work more effectively, and he or she has made a public commitment to promoting more shared-leadership opportunities in the school. During the summer, school leaders meet with faculty to review and refine the school's action plan, but administrators often fail to assess progress throughout the year and hold staff members accountable when responsibilities and tasks are not completed. The school has created a leadership team that includes diverse representation from across the school community, but the leadership team is not consulted when some major decisions related to the school mission, action plan, and academic program are being made.</p>	<p>The principal is a skilled instructional leader who understands teaching, regularly observes classrooms, and spends the majority of his or her time trying to understand the needs of the student body and develop a student-centered academic program that can meet those needs. The principal has articulated a bold, clear, and compelling vision for the school that is supported by a majority of the faculty, students, and parents. The principal and administrative team are committed to providing high-quality professional development to all teachers, and efforts are made to cultivate leadership skills, increase professional knowledge, and use feedback from teachers and students to improve practices and leadership strategies. Administrators make teaching assignments based on identified student needs and specific academic goals, not on tradition or personal preference. Performance data are used to make a compelling case for redesigning school structures and modifying practices in ways that will address student needs more effectively. A commitment to transparency and robust communications keeps all stakeholders apprised of efforts being made to realize the school's vision and mission. The principal recognizes that the school is a public, democratic institution, and that faculty, parents, and other stakeholders need to be involved in major governance decisions. The principal not only honors all voices and listens to concerns, but he or she acts responsively and proactively to address issues before they become a major problem.</p>

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.





STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES

STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Involve faculty and community stakeholders in hiring a principal with a strong classroom-teaching background and deep understanding of how to lead systemic school-improvement process.</li><li>■ Devote at least 50% of the principal's time to school and instructional improvement (i.e., leading curriculum discussions, providing formative and summative feedback to teachers on instruction, participating alongside teachers in instructionally focused professional development, examining student data with teachers, etc.).</li><li>■ Leverage formal leadership roles to foster a student-focused culture in which student needs—both individual and collective—take priority over other concerns.</li><li>■ Require the principal to participate regularly in professional learning groups with faculty and with principals from other schools to discuss common issues and effective leadership strategies.</li><li>■ Conduct annual whole-school reviews, using multiple measures and data sets, to determine what resources and support teachers need to improve student performance and outcomes.</li><li>■ Develop communication processes that ensure the principal regularly and openly discusses the school's work with the staff, community, school board, superintendent, state legislators, and other community leaders.</li></ul>	

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school community—especially the superintendent, school board, and faculty—have developed a rigorous selection process for new principals to ensure that the qualifications, skills, and personalities of candidates fit the school's vision, mission, and values.</li><li>■ The principal and other school leaders regularly visit classrooms, meet with individual teachers and students, and attend school and community functions.</li><li>■ The principal knows the names of students and staff, and is deeply knowledgeable about the school.</li><li>■ Teachers and students regularly bring their concerns to the principal and/or leadership team.</li></ul>	

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>The school's governance structure and decision-making process have not been clearly articulated or publicly shared, and participation in major school decisions remains closed to most stakeholders. Most decisions are top-down and made with little input from the staff despite some attempts to broaden participation in governance. The school has not institutionalized processes that encourage and support aspiring teacher-leaders, and school-supported professional development does not explicitly address leadership-building skills. School priorities have not been clearly articulated or communicated, which has created confusion about staff responsibilities and led to a general reticence about taking risks or trying new approaches.</p>	<p>The school has developed a shared governance structure, but roles, operational specifics, and accountability procedures remain somewhat vague and undefined. Teachers and other staff members have a greater understanding of the rationale for and intention of decisions made by the principal, and efforts to improve communication and transparency are fostering greater trust and confidence in the administrative team. Leadership roles are routinely offered to the staff, but decision-making authority is limited and leadership responsibilities fall within narrowly defined parameters. Teachers do not feel entirely comfortable questioning administrative decisions, suggesting alternative approaches, or incorporating new strategies into their classroom practice. The principal operates under the belief that he or she needs to be involved in every school decision, which creates a "bottleneck" when it comes to implementing and advancing new initiatives.</p>	<p>The school has created a leadership committee made up of a representative selection of stakeholders (administrators, teachers, students, parents) from diverse socioeconomic, cultural, and special-needs backgrounds. A consistent leadership team—made up of skilled, knowledgeable, and motivated faculty—plays a major role in leading school-improvement efforts, shaping the school's strategic plan and academic goals, advocating for the concerns of staff and students, and improving communication and understanding between the administration (school board, superintendent, school administrators) and all stakeholders in the school community. All teachers are held to high expectations, but they are also given the decision-making autonomy they need to address and remain responsive to student needs. The school culture is collaborative, respectful, and collegial, and the staff members take pride in conducting themselves in a professional and respectful manner during interactions with students, parents, and the public. The faculty is involved in critical instructional decisions, including the selection of instructional resources, the design of professional development, and the creation of the school's action plan. Administrators and other school leaders listen to and honor all voices in the school community, especially voices that have traditionally been marginalized or underrepresented.</p>

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school's performance in this dimension.



**STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES**

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Create a system of communication, transparency, and accountability that ensures fidelity to the schools vision, mission, and action plan.</li> <li>■ Examine supervision-and-evaluation procedures and other school-wide decision-making processes for ways to encourage greater shared leadership.</li> <li>■ Create ad-hoc working groups, coordinated by a consistent school leadership team, to address specific issues or achieve specific goals.</li> <li>■ Create a process for administrators to regularly meet with individual staff members to discuss job satisfaction, career aspirations, and personal and professional growth.</li> <li>■ Develop a career pathway, which includes professional support and graduate courses, for motivated teachers to assume greater leadership responsibility over time and eventually attain administrative certification.</li> <li>■ Host public forums in which administrators and other school leaders inform the school community about major decisions and strategic plans, and ensure that meeting minutes and other information are distributed in a timely fashion and made available online.</li> </ul>	<p>OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION</p>

**STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE**

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Parent participation in school activities has increased, particularly among traditionally underrepresented families.</li> <li>■ Student participation in school governance, co-curricular activities, community volunteerism, activism, political campaigns, voting, and local, state, and national student-leadership opportunities has increased.</li> <li>■ Surveys of teachers, students, and parents indicate a high degree of satisfaction with school leadership and support for major school decisions.</li> <li>■ Parents, community members, and local business leaders and policy makers are informed about the school and its programs, and the local news media regularly profiles positive stories of student success and teacher leadership.</li> </ul>	<p>OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION</p>

**STEP 1 >> READ THE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS**

1 INITIATING	3 DEVELOPING	5 PERFORMING
<p>The school culture is largely characterized by complacency and a “don’t rock the boat” mentality, and many important decisions are made in the effort to sidestep potential resistance or pushback from staff and parents. There are no formal structures or processes in place to examine student data at the classroom or team level, largely due to a desire to avoid singling out a specific teacher, group, or department. The principal and other school leaders routinely avoid confrontation or discussions about persistent issues, and poor student-performance results are not openly or honestly discussed with individual teachers. Poor scores on state assessments and other unflattering data may be hidden, excused, or minimized. Inappropriate and unprofessional behavior is often tolerated, which has eroded trust and collegiality among the staff. The school culture remains largely resistant to self-reflection, and the belief that “we’re doing good enough” persists despite evidence that too many students are failing to succeed or graduate.</p>	<p>The superintendent, principal and leadership team have developed a strategic plan for confronting challenges that may arise in response to school-improvement efforts. Decisions are increasingly guided by identified student needs, research on school effectiveness, and sound principles—not by a fear of confrontation, resistance, or possible failure. The school community is no longer making excuses for poor student scores or other unfavorable data, but is taking steps to identify the root causes and undertake strategic actions to address the issues. Administrators, teachers, and other staff have collaboratively developed standards and norms for professional behavior and interactions, although unprofessional behavior by some individuals continues to go unacknowledged by administrators and colleagues. The school’s action plan is bold and ambitious, but the principal and leadership team have been unwilling to advocate for key elements with the superintendent and school board, even though the strategies are in the best interest of their students.</p>	<p>The principal, administrators, and teacher-leaders skillfully handle contentious issues and defend equitable ideals and practices—even in the face of actual or potential attacks—that promote positive learning outcomes for all students. Good intentions and well-laid plans are not undone by careless words or actions, but they are achieved through collaboration, professionalism, and goal-driven moral courage. Each faculty member assumes personal responsibility for addressing interpersonal issues before they turn into problems. School leaders are self-reflective, process concerns and conflicts openly, and move the collective dialogue beyond personal issues and interests. School faculty and staff advocate for the school’s improvement work within the community, and the principal and leadership team work closely with the superintendent and school board to advance critical policies that support a student-centered academic program. When difficult situations arise, the principal proactively communicates with staff, students, parents, and the larger community to minimize the spread of misinformation, including reaching out to school board and local media. In general, challenges are not avoided or postponed, but embraced by administrators, faculty, and staff.</p>

**STEP 4 >> SCORE YOUR SCHOOL**

Place an **X** on the scale below to indicate your school’s performance in this dimension.



**STEP 2 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES**

SAMPLE STRATEGIES	OUR STRATEGIES IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Openly review the school mission statement with staff, parents, and the community, and compare existing practices and organizational structures with the mission statement to ensure that programs are in alignment with its expressed principles.</li> <li>■ Adopt an "open door" policy so that any staff member, student, or parent with a significant concern about the school can meet with the principal and leadership team.</li> <li>■ Announce the school's commitment to equitable practices and outcomes for all students, and have the principal publicly outline a clear plan for achieving these goals.</li> <li>■ Establish a set of school-wide norms that encourage open conversation within and outside of the school regarding student performance results and other data.</li> <li>■ Adopt a set of shared expectations and norms—aligned with the school's vision and mission—for staff meetings, professional conduct, and adult-student relationships.</li> <li>■ Allow time in faculty meetings for staff members to raise concerns and question decisions in a constructive, respectful, and supportive manner.</li> </ul>	

**STEP 3 >> RECORD PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE**

SAMPLE EVIDENCE	OUR EVIDENCE IN THIS DIMENSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Criticism and differing opinions are expressed constructively and respectfully among staff and within the school community generally.</li> <li>■ Student interactions reflect the positive behaviors, attitudes, and social skills modeled by teachers and other staff members.</li> <li>■ Administrators and teachers regularly ask students and colleagues for feedback on their leadership and pedagogy.</li> <li>■ School leaders regularly discuss the school's efforts with the district leadership and, when necessary, advocate for changes to district or state policies to create an environment that is more supportive of the school action plan.</li> </ul>	



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# RESEARCH NOTE

*Global Best Practices* was researched and developed by the New England Secondary School Consortium, which includes the Great Schools Partnership and department of education staff from Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Preliminary drafts of this tool were reviewed and vetted by Michelle LaPointe of LaPointe Analysis and Evaluation for Decisionmakers, the National High School Center at the American Institutes for Research, and Joseph DiMartino at the Center for Secondary School Redesign. Michelle LaPointe is the author of the *Global Best Practices* literature review, which outlines the specific research literature consulted during the development of this tool. The Academy for Educational Development’s High School Reform Strategy Toolkit ([highschooltoolkit.com](http://highschooltoolkit.com)) was also consulted extensively, and many of its recommended strategies and practices have been incorporated.

The New England Secondary School Consortium and the Great Schools Partnership are solely responsible for the contents of this document and any inadvertent factual errors.

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# ABOUT THE NEW ENGLAND SECONDARY SCHOOL CONSORTIUM

The New England Secondary School Consortium is a pioneering regional partnership committed to fostering forward-thinking innovations in the design and delivery of secondary education across the New England region. The five partner states of Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont believe that our bold vision, shared goals, and innovative strategies will empower us to close persistent achievement gaps, promote greater educational equity and opportunity for all students, and lead our educators into a new era of secondary schooling. The Consortium's goal is to ensure that every public high school student in our states receives an education that prepares them for their success in the colleges, careers, and communities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

From the schoolhouse to the statehouse, the Consortium is working to develop and support bold educational strategies that empower the next

generation of citizens, workers, and leaders to be prosperous and knowledgeable participants in our global community. The members of the Consortium recognize that the traditional ways of educating students are no longer aligned with today's civic and professional expectations, and that the time has come to rethink the traditional high school experience on a regional scale. By building equitable systems of public secondary education in each of the five partner states, the Consortium plans to make the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind that were once the possession of a few the universal standard for all. To this end, the Consortium will support the development of high-performing, internationally competitive schools and educational experiences that will better mirror the lives and learning needs of today's students. No longer limited by building design, geography, or educational convention, we envision these high-performing schools becoming versatile community learning centers that

prioritize individual learning needs, blend secondary and postsecondary experiences, provide engaging educational opportunities both inside and outside the classroom, and offer a variety of student-designed pathways to graduation—all while emphasizing global understanding, multicultural awareness, technological literacy, real-world applications, and other challenging 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

The Consortium is funded by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, the largest philanthropy in New England focused exclusively on education, in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The Great Schools Partnership, a nonprofit school-support organization based in Portland, Maine, is the Consortium's lead coordinator.

# NEWENGLANDSSC.ORG

## Appendix 4

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*Maine's Educator Effectiveness Law; Public Law  
2011, chapter 635 (LD 1858)*

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

## **An Act To Ensure Effective Teaching and School Leadership**

**Mandate preamble.** This measure requires one or more local units of government to expand or modify activities so as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues but does not provide funding for at least 90% of those expenditures. Pursuant to the Constitution of Maine, Article IX, Section 21, 2/3 of all of the members elected to each House have determined it necessary to enact this measure.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

### **PART A**

**Sec. A-1. 20-A MRSA §1055, sub-§10**, as amended by PL 2011, c. 172, §1, is further amended to read:

**10. Supervise school employees.** The superintendent is responsible for ~~the evaluation of~~ implementing a performance evaluation and professional growth system for all teachers and principals pursuant to chapter 508 and an evaluation system for all other employees of the school administrative unit. The superintendent shall evaluate probationary teachers during, but not limited to, their 2nd year of employment. The method of evaluation must be determined by the school board, be in compliance with the requirements of chapter 508 and be implemented by the superintendent.

**Sec. A-2. 20-A MRSA §13201, 5th ¶**, as amended by PL 2011, c. 172, §2 and affected by §4, is further amended to read:

The right to terminate a contract, after due notice of 90 days, is reserved to the school board when changes in local conditions warrant the elimination of the teaching position for which the contract was made. The order of layoff and recall is a negotiable item in accordance with the procedures set forth in Title 26, chapter 9-A. In any negotiated agreement, the criteria negotiated by the school board and the bargaining agent to establish the order of layoff and recall must include the teacher's effectiveness rating pursuant to chapter 508 as a factor and may also include, but may not be limited to, seniority.

**Sec. A-3. 20-A MRSA c. 508** is enacted to read:

### **CHAPTER 508**

## **EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS**

### **§ 13701. Definitions**

As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

**1. Educator.** "Educator" means a teacher or a principal.

**2. Effectiveness rating.** "Effectiveness rating" means the level of effectiveness of an educator derived through implementation of a performance evaluation and professional growth system.

**3. Performance evaluation and professional growth system.** "Performance evaluation and professional growth system" or "system" means a method developed in compliance with this chapter by which educators are evaluated, rated on the basis of effectiveness and provided opportunities for professional growth.

**4. Professional improvement plan.** "Professional improvement plan" means a written plan developed by a school or district administrator with input from an educator that outlines the steps to be taken over the coming year to improve the effectiveness of the educator. The plan must include but need not be limited to appropriate professional development opportunities.

**5. Summative effectiveness rating.** "Summative effectiveness rating" means the effectiveness rating of an educator that is assigned at the end of an evaluation period. Ratings or comments provided to the educator during the evaluation period for the purpose of providing feedback, prior to assignment of a final effectiveness rating, are not summative effectiveness ratings.

## **§ 13702. Local development and implementation of system**

Each school administrative unit shall develop and implement a performance evaluation and professional growth system for educators. The system must meet the criteria set forth in this chapter and rules adopted pursuant to this chapter and must be approved by the department.

## **§ 13703. Use of effectiveness rating; grievance**

A superintendent shall use effectiveness ratings of educators to inform strategic human capital decision making, including, but not limited to, decision making regarding recruitment, selection, induction, mentoring, professional development, compensation, assignment and dismissal.

Receipt of summative effectiveness ratings indicating that a teacher is ineffective for 2 consecutive years constitutes just cause for nonrenewal of a teacher's contract unless the ratings are the result of bad faith.

Any appeal of, or grievance relating to, an evaluation conducted pursuant to this chapter or an effectiveness rating resulting from implementation of a system is limited to matters relating to the implementation of the system or the existence of bad faith in an evaluation or the assignment of a rating. The professional judgment involved in an evaluation or implementation of the system is not subject to appeal or grievance.

## **§ 13704. Elements of system**

A performance evaluation and professional growth system consists of the following elements:

**1. Standards of professional practice.** Standards of professional practice by which the performance of educators must be evaluated.

A. The department shall provide, by rule, a set of standards of professional practice or a set of criteria for determining acceptable locally determined standards for teachers and a set of standards

of professional practice or a set of criteria for determining acceptable locally determined standards for principals;

**2. Multiple measures of effectiveness.** Multiple measures of educator effectiveness, other than standards of professional practice, including but not limited to student learning and growth;

**3. Rating scale.** A rating scale consisting of 4 levels of effectiveness.

A. The rating must be based on standards of professional practice and measures of educator effectiveness. The proportionate weight of the standards and the measures is a local decision, but measurements of student learning and growth must be a significant factor in the determination of the rating of an educator.

B. The rating scale must set forth the professional growth opportunities and the employment consequences tied to each level.

C. At least 2 of the levels must represent effectiveness, and at least one level must represent ineffectiveness;

**4. Professional development.** A process for using information from the evaluation process to inform professional development;

**5. Implementation procedures.** Implementation procedures that include the following:

A. Evaluation of educators on a regular basis, performed by one or more trained evaluators. The frequency of evaluations may vary depending on the effectiveness level at which the educator is performing, but observations of professional practice, formative feedback and continuous improvement conversations must occur throughout the year for all educators;

B. Ongoing training on implementation of the system to ensure that all educators and evaluators understand the system and have the knowledge and skills needed to participate in a meaningful way;

C. A peer review component to the evaluation and professional growth system and opportunities for educators to share, learn and continually improve their practice; and

D. Formation of a steering committee composed of teachers, administrators and other school administrative unit staff that regularly reviews and refines the performance evaluation and professional growth system to ensure that it is aligned with school administrative unit goals and priorities; and

**6. Professional improvement plan.** The opportunity for a educator who receives a summative effectiveness rating indicating ineffectiveness in any given year to implement a professional improvement plan.

## **§ 13705. Phase-in of requirements**

The requirements of this chapter apply to all school administrative units beginning in the 2015-2016 school year. In the 2013-2014 school year, each unit shall develop a system that meets the

standards of this chapter, in collaboration with teachers, principals, administrators, school board members, parents and other members of the public. In the 2014-2015 school year, each unit shall operate as a pilot project the system developed in the prior year by applying it in one or more of the schools in the unit or by applying it without using results in any official manner or shall employ other means to provide information to enable the unit to adjust the system prior to the first year of full implementation. Nothing in this section prohibits a unit from fully implementing the system earlier than the 2015-2016 school year.

## **§ 13706. Rules**

The department shall adopt rules to implement this chapter, including but not limited to a rule relating to the method of identifying the educator or educators whose effectiveness ratings are affected by the measurement of learning or growth of a particular student. The department shall also adopt rules pertaining to the approval of performance evaluation and professional growth systems pursuant to section 13702. Rules adopted pursuant to this section are major substantive rules pursuant to Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

**Sec. A-4. 20-A MRSA §15681, sub-§1, ¶D** is enacted to read:

D. To receive targeted educator evaluation funds, a school administrative unit must have or be in the process of developing a performance evaluation and professional growth system pursuant to chapter 508 and the rules adopted pursuant to that chapter.

**Sec. A-5. 20-A MRSA §15681, sub-§6** is enacted to read:

**6. Targeted funds for educator evaluation.** For educator evaluation funds beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the commissioner shall calculate the amount available to assist school administrative units in developing and implementing performance evaluation and professional growth systems pursuant to chapter 508.

**Sec. A-6. Council created.** The Maine Educator Effectiveness Council, referred to in this section as "the council," is created to make recommendations regarding implementation of the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, chapter 508 to the Commissioner of Education and the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.

**1. Members.** The council consists of the Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's designee and the following members, appointed by the Commissioner of Education:

- A. A member of the State Board of Education, nominated by the state board;
- B. Four public school teachers, at least one of whom is a special education teacher, appointed from a list of names provided by the Maine Education Association;
- C. A member representing educators in tribal schools in this State, appointed from a list of names provided by the respective tribal schools that are affiliated with Maine Indian Education;
- D. Two public school administrators, appointed from a list of names provided by the Maine Principals' Association and the Maine School Superintendents Association;
- E. Two members of school boards, appointed from a list of names provided by the Maine School Boards Association;

- F. One faculty member representing approved educator preparation programs;
- G. Two members of the business community; and
- H. Two members of the general public with interest and experience in the education field.

The council must be cochaired by the Commissioner of Education and one other council member elected by the full membership of the council. The council may establish subcommittees and may appoint persons who are not members of the council to serve on the subcommittees as needed to conduct the council's work.

**2. Duties.** The council shall recommend standards for implementing a system of evaluation and support of teachers and principals consistent with the requirements of Title 20-A, chapter 508. The council shall:

- A. Recommend a set of professional practice standards applicable to teachers and a set of professional practice standards applicable to principals;
- B. Recommend a 4-level rating scale with clear and distinct definitions applicable to teachers and principals;
- C. Recommend potential measures of student learning and growth;
- D. Recommend the major components of an evaluation process, including but not limited to:
  - (1) Ongoing training to ensure that evaluators and teachers and principals have a full understanding of the evaluation system and its implementation;
  - (2) Methods of gathering evidence for the evaluation, which may include observation by supervisors and peers, self-reflection, student or parent surveys, analysis of artifacts and evidence portfolios;
  - (3) Methods of providing feedback to teachers and principals for formative evaluation purposes;
  - (4) Weighting of measures used in evaluating teachers and principals, which must provide that student learning and growth indicators inform a significant portion of the effectiveness rating;
  - (5) Methods for aligning district, school and classroom goals using the evaluation system; and
  - (6) Methods for linking summative effectiveness ratings to human capital decisions; and
- E. Recommend a system of supports and professional development linked to effectiveness ratings for teachers and principals, including a process for developing and implementing a professional improvement plan.

**3. Report.** The Commissioner of Education shall submit a report regarding the work of the council to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs no later than November 1, 2012. The report must include the council's recommendations regarding implementation of the requirements set forth in Title 20-A, chapter 508 and recommendations regarding the continuing work of the council.

**4. Staff assistance.** The Department of Education shall provide staff assistance to the council. The department may seek and employ grant funds to provide additional assistance.

**5. Council continuation.** The council is authorized to continue meeting, if it so desires, 90 days

after adjournment of the First Regular Session of 126th Legislature.

## **PART B**

**Sec. B-1. 20-A MRSA §13008** is enacted to read:

### **§ 13008. Educator preparation program data**

**1. Definitions.** As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Educator preparation program" means a public or private baccalaureate-level or postbaccalaureate-level program approved by the state board to recommend graduates for certification pursuant to chapter 502 as prekindergarten to grade 12 teachers, educational specialists or school leaders.

B. "Program completer" means a person who, by successfully completing all of an educator preparation program's requirements, has qualified for a recommendation for certification as a prekindergarten to grade 12 teacher, an educational specialist or a school leader.

**2. Data collection.** The department shall collect data relating to educator preparation programs, including but not limited to the following information with respect to each educator preparation program:

A. The number of program completers;

B. The number of program completers who pass certification tests and the number of those who attain provisional licensure in the State;

C. The number of program completers who proceed from provisional licensure to professional licensure; and

D. The number of program completers who are teaching in schools in this State 3 and 5 years after they complete that educator preparation program.

**3. Report.** The department shall annually report the data collected under this section to the Governor, the state board and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over education matters.

**Sec. B-2. 20-A MRSA §13011, sub-§6,** as enacted by PL 1989, c. 889, §8, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

**6. Alternative pathways to certification.** The state board shall develop and adopt rules providing a method for a person who has not completed an approved educator preparation program as defined under section 13008 to obtain provisional educator certification through an alternative pathway that:

A. Is designed for candidates who can demonstrate subject matter competency that is directly

related to the certificate endorsement being sought and obtained through prior academic achievement or work experience;

B. May feature an accelerated program of preparation;

C. Uses mentorship programs that partner teacher candidates with mentor teachers; and

D. Includes accountability provisions to ensure that teacher candidates demonstrate the knowledge and skills established pursuant to section 13012, subsection 2-B prior to issuance of a provisional teacher certificate.

**Sec. B-3. 20-A MRSA §13011, sub-§10**, as enacted by PL 2003, c. 445, §2, is amended to read:

**10. Conditional certificate; transitional endorsement; exception.** A conditional certificate is a certificate for teachers and educational specialists who have not met all of the requirements for a provisional or professional certificate. A school administrative unit may employ a conditionally certified teacher or educational specialist who is in the process of becoming professionally certified notwithstanding the availability of provisionally or professionally certified teachers or educational specialists. Any amendment to the rules adopted pursuant to this chapter that revises the qualifications for a conditional certificate or transitional endorsement does not apply to a person who was issued a conditional certificate or transitional endorsement prior to or during the school year preceding the adoption of revisions to the rules as long as the holder of the conditional certificate or transitional endorsement annually completes the required course work and testing as determined by the department for the school year preceding the adoption of revised rules.

**Sec. B-4. 20-A MRSA §13012, sub-§2-A**, as enacted by PL 2001, c. 534, §2 and amended by PL 2005, c. 397, Pt. D, §3, is further amended to read:

**2-A. Qualifications.** State board rules governing the qualifications for a provisional teacher certificate must require that a certificate may only be issued to an applicant who meets the requirements of subsection 2-B, has successfully completed a student teaching experience of at least 15 weeks and:

A. For elementary school, has met academic and preprofessional requirements established by the state board for teaching at the elementary school level and has graduated from an accredited, degree-granting educational institution upon completion of:

(1) A bachelor's degree from a 4-year accredited college or university;

(2) A 4-year program in liberal arts and sciences; or

(3) An approved 4-year teacher preparation program and has majored in the subject area to be taught or an interdisciplinary program in liberal arts;

B. For secondary school, has met academic and preprofessional requirements established by the state board for teaching at the secondary school level and has graduated from an accredited, degree-granting educational institution upon completion of:

- (1) A bachelor's degree from a 4-year accredited college or university;
- (2) A 4-year program in liberal arts and sciences; or
- (3) An approved 4-year teacher preparation program and has majored in the subject area to be taught;

C. Is otherwise qualified by having met separate educational criteria for specialized teaching areas, including, but not limited to, special education, home economics, agriculture, career and technical education, art, music, business education, physical education and industrial arts, as established by the state board for teaching in these specialized areas; or

D. Has completed 6 credit hours of approved study within 5 years prior to application, has met entry-level standards and has held either a professional teacher certificate that expired more than 5 years prior to the application date or a provisional teacher certificate issued prior to July 1, 1988 that expired more than 5 years prior to the application date.

**Sec. B-5. Certification rules.** The State Board of Education shall amend its rules relating to certification of educators under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 13012 to require that any person seeking an endorsement to teach kindergarten to grade 8 students must demonstrate proficiency in math and reading instruction, including evidence-based reading instruction. For the purposes of this section, "evidence-based reading instruction" means instructional practices that have been proven by systematic, objective, valid and peer-reviewed research to lead to predictable gains in reading achievement. The requirement must apply to all teachers and educational specialists, including teachers in special education and teachers of English language learners.

**Sec. B-6. Alternative certification working group.** The State Board of Education shall establish a working group to develop one or more alternative certification pathways that meet the standards set forth in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 13011, subsection 6. Members of the State Board of Education shall participate in the working group, and the State Board of Education shall invite the participation of representatives of the Maine Education Association, the Maine School Superintendents Association, the Maine Principals' Association, the Maine School Boards Association, Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities and Maine Administrators of Career and Technical Education, representatives of approved educator preparation programs, parents and the business community and other interested parties. The working group shall submit a report describing one or more alternative certification pathways to the State Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education. The State Board of Education shall submit the report to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs no later than November 1, 2012. The report must include pathway descriptions, the working group's recommendations and any draft legislation or rules needed to implement the recommendations.

Effective 90 days following adjournment of the 125th Legislature, Second Regular Session, unless otherwise indicated.

## Appendix 5

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*Lewiston Public Schools Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth Program (part of the Maine Schools for Excellence project)*



LEWISTON  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth Program

*Proposed for School Year 2012-13*

“The primary purpose of an effective teacher evaluation system is to foster improvement in teaching practice and student growth. The best system includes rubrics that clearly communicate exemplary teaching practice. Such a system supports and promotes teacher reflection, professional development and collaboration. It is equitable and able to differentiate among various teaching positions.”

- Lewiston Steering Committee  
February, 2011

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## Introduction

In February 2011, the Lewiston School Committee accepted a Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Grant centered on improving educator effectiveness and student learning. The grant is overseen by our 25-member District Steering Committee (DSC) made up of teachers, administrators and a community member. The DSC has worked on improvements in many areas including the development of a new teacher evaluation system.

The present teacher evaluation tool used in Lewiston Public Schools was developed prior to 1995. The current model was not meeting the needs for desired professional development on instructional practice and student outcomes. In addition, our present system falls far short of meeting either Federal and State mandates or public expectations that teacher evaluation include consideration of student achievement data.

The Steering Committee has developed a new model, the Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth (TEPG) program that address the shortfalls above. Specifically, the evaluation tool will consider student growth and teacher performance related to the Five Core Propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). The National Board was founded by teachers in 1985 in response to the educational shortcomings identified in the now well-known report, A Nation at Risk, published by the U.S. Department of Education in 1984. The Board wrote the Core Propositions and 17 related standards and developed a national teacher certification process commonly referred to as National Board teacher certification.

Lewiston teachers are learning about the Core Propositions (see Figure 1, next page) and related standards through our 2011-2012 professional development focus called the Take One! process. This professional development will continue in 2012-13 through the introduction and training in the new TEPG program. The program development and refinement will take time, and will continue throughout the 5-year grant period. Teacher input and feedback will be crucial – and asked for – in order to fine-tune the tool and the overall system and assure that it is meeting its intended purposes.

The goals of the TEPG program and the process used in its design align directly with the recommendations of national education groups such as the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. The Center recommends that “To further the development of direct links between teacher evaluation and instructional improvement, states and districts need to nurture an educational climate in which evaluation is not seen as punitive and teachers are highly invested in the process. The core of evaluation reform efforts should be human capacity building at all levels so that states, districts, and schools can identify and learn from top-performing teachers, support discouraged and less successful teachers, and continue to develop all teachers toward their full potential.”

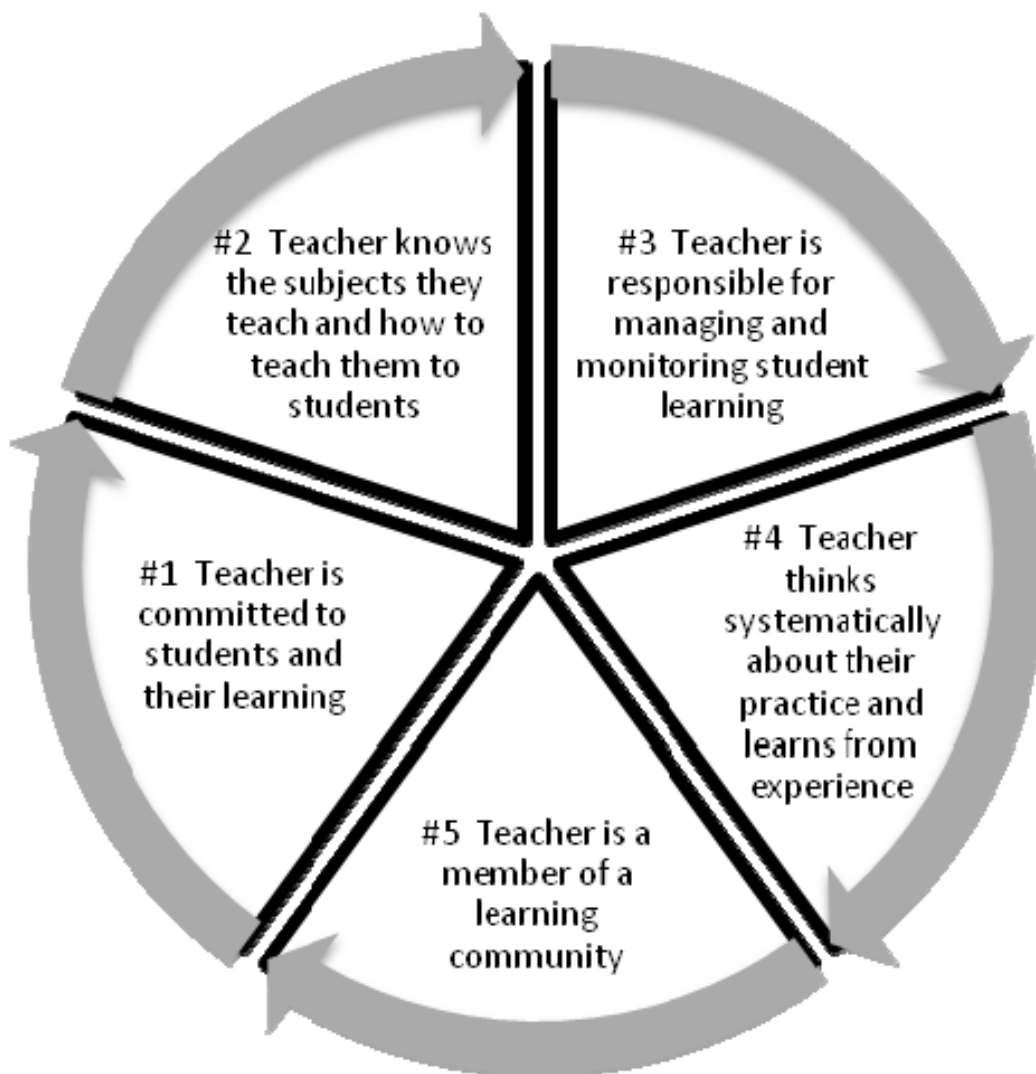


Figure 1

NBPTS Core Propositions

## **Program Purpose**

The overarching purpose of the TEPG program is to **improve instruction and student learning growth** by:

- Serving as a measurement of performance of individual teachers;
- Clarifying expectations and serving as a guide for teachers as they reflect upon and improve their effectiveness;
- Facilitating collaboration by providing a common language to discuss performance;
- Serving as a basis for identifying areas where professional development can improve instructional effectiveness;
- Focusing the goals and objectives of schools and districts as they support, monitor, and evaluate their teachers; and
- Serving as a tool in developing coaching and mentoring programs for teachers.

The program includes the following key features:

- Allows administrators to provide on-going, concrete feedback to teachers about their performance against a clear, detailed NBPTS-anchored performance rubric through classroom observations and review of student data and teacher performance;
- Utilizes a performance rubric that includes multiple rating options and level-cutting language that enables administrators to clearly identify and describe differences in instructional performance;
- Incorporates student growth as measured by objective assessments as a significant factor in evaluations, with a plan to be able to collect such data for the vast majority of classroom teachers within the next 3 years;
- Provides support for teachers who fall below performance standards;
- Includes a pilot peer review process that will be continually refined over the course of the grant to ensure optimal benefit to teachers as a formative assessment tool;
- Incorporates a process of on-going self-reflection, goal setting and evaluation to drive continuous performance improvement and professional growth; and
- Provides regular training to teachers and administrators in the TEPG process, opportunities and proper use of the observation tool.

# National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

The foundation for the TEPG program are the following National Board's Five Core Propositions and 17 standards that specify the knowledge, skills, abilities, and commitments required for accomplished teaching. (Our TEPG program also includes performance on two goals, one for student growth and one for professional growth, both discussed in the next section.)

➤ **Core Proposition #1: Teachers are committed to students and their learning.**

**1.1** Teacher recognizes individual differences in their students and adjusts their practice accordingly.

**1.2** Teacher has an understanding of how students develop and learn and know the backgrounds, abilities, and interests of students.

**1.3** Teacher treats students equitably and fosters a stimulating and collaborative environment where all students are encouraged to participate.

**1.4** Teacher's mission extends beyond the cognitive capacity of their students.

➤ **Core Proposition #2: Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.**

**2.1** Teacher appreciates how knowledge in their subject is created, organized, and linked to other disciplines.

**2.2** Teacher commands specialized knowledge of how to convey a subject to students.

**2.3** Teacher generates multiple paths to knowledge.

➤ **Core Proposition #3: Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.**

**3.1** Teacher calls on multiple methods to meet their goals.

**3.2** Teacher orchestrates learning in group settings.

**3.3** Teacher places a premium on student engagement.

**3.4** Teacher regularly assesses student progress.

- **Core Proposition #4: Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.**

**4.1** Teacher is continually making difficult choices that test their judgment.

**4.2** Teacher seeks the advice of others and draws upon education research and scholarship to improve their practice.

- **Core Proposition #5: Teachers are members of learning communities.**

**5.1** Teacher contributes to school effectiveness by collaborating with other professionals.

**5.2** Teacher works collaboratively with parents.

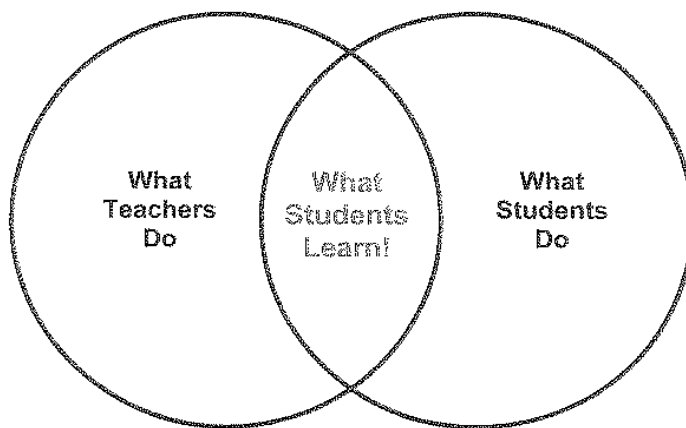
**5.3** Teacher takes advantage of community resources.

**5.4** Teacher considers their professional ethics in all interactions.

The 2011-2012 professional development focus on the National Board's Take One! is at the heart of accomplished teaching, e.g., evidence-based teaching. Quoting the National Board, evidence-based teaching is "a way of structuring classroom planning and instruction that allows teachers to continuously collect, interpret and use evidence of student learning to make appropriate decisions that guide future instruction.

Evidence-based teaching is the process of continually using data (e.g., observations, student work, assessments, responses to questions) to ensure teaching is tightly aligned to individual student needs and to ensure high levels of learning..." As illustrated in Figure 2 below, for student learning to occur, there must be a strong connection between what teachers know and are able to do to facilitate student learning, and what students do that optimize their learning.

***Venn Diagram: Evidence-based Teaching***

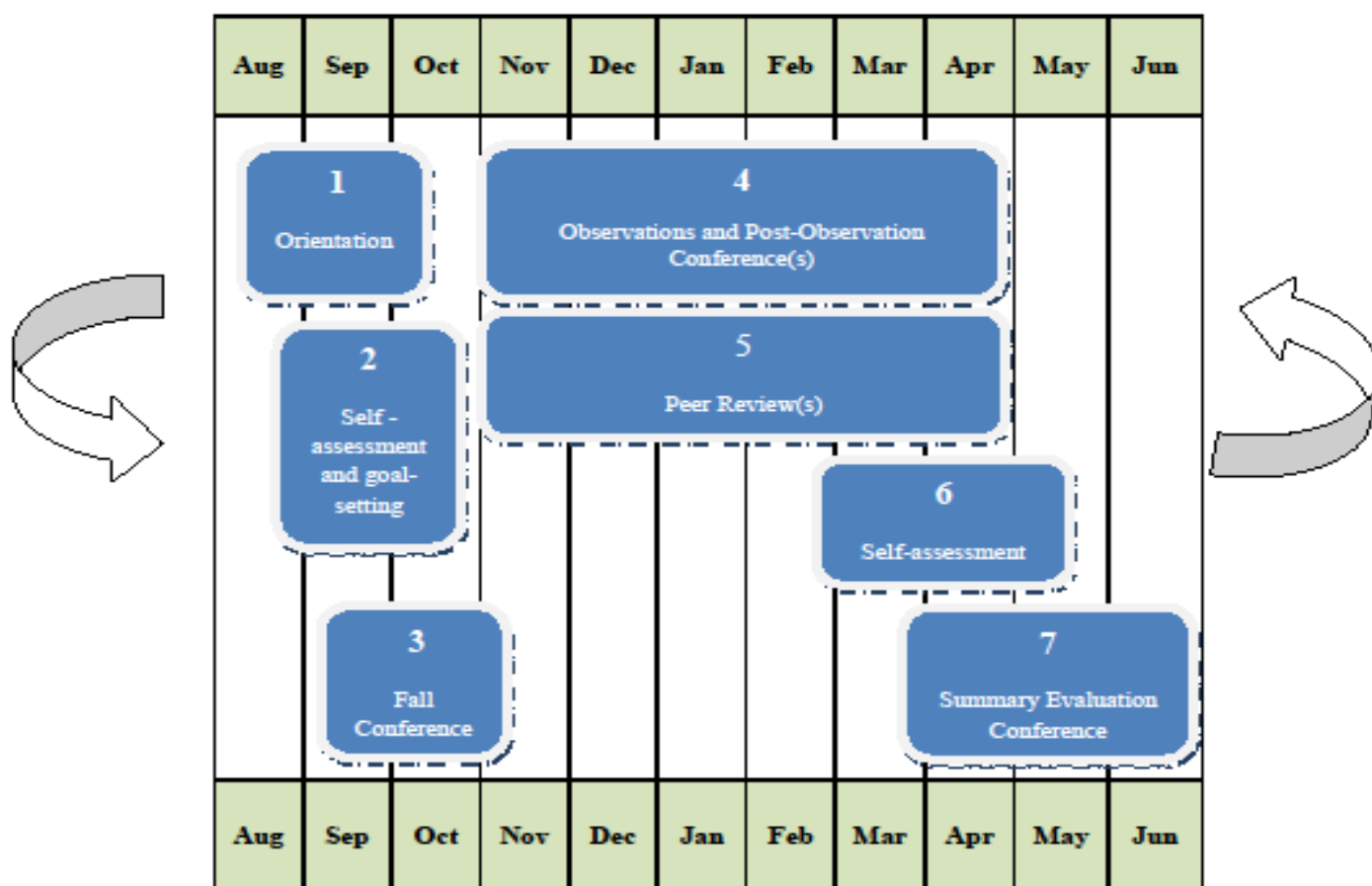


# Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth

## Key Components

Before participating in the evaluation process, all teachers and administrators will be trained on the TEPG program. TEPG training for teachers will include work on the National Board's Core Propositions and standards, the evaluation process, support for teachers on growth plans, student growth measures to be used, goal setting, deadlines and accountabilities. Administrators will be trained on skill development in the effective use of the evaluation instrument to ensure inter-rater reliability. Our goal is to involve all teachers in all components during the 2012-13 school year while realizing that additional administrator support may be necessary for this to be accomplished.

The seven key components and annual timeline of the TEPG program are illustrated in Figure 3 and described beginning on the next page:



**Figure 2**  
**Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth Program**  
**Components and Timeline**

## **Component 1: Orientation**

At the beginning of each school year, the administrator will provide the teacher with this TEPG handbook, which will include the:

- TEPG Rubric including student growth measures to be used, if applicable;
- TEPG goal setting form and completed example;
- Lesson Description template for use with planned observation;
- Evidence Portfolio template; and
- A schedule for completing all components of the performance evaluation process.

Copies may be provided by electronic means.

The administrator will briefly review the overall intent of the TEPG program as well as the National Board Standards. For new teachers, a more in-depth presentation of the TEPG program will be part of the induction and mentoring program.

## **Component 2: Teacher Self-Assessment and Goal Setting**

Using the TEPG rubric the teacher shall review each of the 17 performance standards, student growth measurements, if applicable, and reflect on prior year strengths and improvement opportunity. Using the TEPG goal setting form, the teacher shall identify at least one (1) student learning goal *and* one (1) professional growth goal, both of which should align with school priorities. Each section of the goal setting form must be completed.

## **Component 3: Fall Conference**

The teacher meets with the administrator to review and confirm student learning and professional growth goals established in Component 2. This meeting will include discussion of the self-assessment and schedule for planned and unplanned observations during the school year. Once goals have been finalized, teachers shall begin gathering evidence of effective instructional practice and goal achievement to be included in an evidence portfolio to be presented to the administrator at the Summary Evaluation Conference (Component 7).

Prior to planned observations, the teacher shall provide the administrator with a written description of the lesson(s) that includes the student learning goals, activities and any assessment process or product that will be used to indicate if students are moving toward the goals.

#### **Component 4: Administrator Observations and Post Observation Conference(s)**

A *planned* observation shall last at least 30 minutes. The administrator shall conduct at least 3 formal observations of all probationary teachers each year. Continuing Contract Teachers (CCT) will receive at least one planned observation during their scheduled evaluation year (see p. x). During all planned observations, the administrator shall note the teacher's performance in relationship to the applicable National Board Standards on the TEPG.

The administrator shall conduct a post-observation conference no later than 10 school days after each formal planned observation. During the post-observation conference, the administrator and teacher shall discuss and document on the TEPG evaluation form, goal status, performance strengths, and improvement opportunities observed during the lesson.

An *unplanned* observation can be a 5-10 minute short visit or walkthrough, or last up to an entire class period. Multiple unplanned observations will be conducted on ALL teachers. An administrator may use information gathered from unplanned observations in completing the TEPG evaluation form and is also expected to follow-up with the teacher on any significant issue identified or appropriate constructive feedback.

#### **Component 5: Peer Review**

Each teacher will receive a peer review annually and will be provided the opportunity to suggest three other teachers to complete the observation. The observation and pre and post conferences are expected to focus on a minimum of three standards selected by the administrator and three standards selected by the teacher being observed. Each standard should be taken from Core Propositions #1, #2 or #3 as they are directly observable. The form included on page 27 of this handbook is to be used for this process and is to be the only document to be included in a teacher's personnel file. All discussion between the teacher being observed and the observer are to be considered confidential and for use by the teacher to enhance teaching practices.

#### **Component 6: Teacher Self-Assessment**

At least two weeks prior to the scheduled Summary Evaluation Conference (Component 7) the teacher shall present a completed self-assessment (using the TEPG Rubric) and evidence portfolio to the administrator.

#### **Component 7: Summary Evaluation Conference**

Prior to the scheduled conference, the administrator shall complete a *draft* TEPG Summary Rating Form based on evidence gathered from multiple sources, including e.g., the teacher's self-assessment and evidence

portfolio. The administrator will also develop draft recommendations for professional development. This draft Summary Evaluation Form will be provided to the teacher in advance of the scheduled conference.

During the Summary Evaluation Conference the administrator and teacher shall discuss the teacher's self-assessment, the teacher's current year student learning and professional growth goals, classroom observations, artifacts and other items included in the teacher's evidence portfolio. At the conclusion of the Summary Evaluation Conference, the administrator shall: give a rating for each Standard and goal\* in the TEPG Rubric; provide the teacher with the opportunity to add comments to the Summary Evaluation Form, and review the completed form with the teacher. The administrator and teacher will sign the final Summary Evaluation Form before it is placed in the teacher's personnel file.

\*In some cases, the Summary Evaluation Conference will occur before the student assessment results and applicable goal rating are available. Final results will be added summary rating form and shared with the teacher before the end of the school year.

## Use of TEPG Summary Rating

The summary rating for each teacher will be based on a maximum of 100 points broken down as follows:

Maximum Points	Area		
68	17 National Board Standards valued up to 4 points each as detailed below		
	<u>Level</u>	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Description</u>
	4	Distinguished	Clear, consistent, and convincing evidence of accomplished instructional practice
	3	Effective	Clear evidence of accomplished instructional practice
	2	Developing	Limited evidence of accomplished instructional practice
	1	Ineffective	Limited or no evidence of accomplished instructional practice
10	Student Growth Measurements Identified in Teacher Scorecard		
14	Student Growth Goal		
8	Professional Growth Goal		
0	7C Student Survey (The 7C Survey will not receive any weight in a teacher's TEPG summary rating during the 2012-2013 school year. The Survey is expected to be given some weight in future years.)		

Note: The measurements used in the teacher scorecard will be identified by the District Steering Committee prior to the beginning of the applicable school year and will likely reflect differences among teachers who directly impact, partially impact or do not impact the growth of individual students in measurable areas. The Committee may also determine that a particular standard or goal is not applicable to a certain position. In such case, the points shall be scaled upward so that the relative relationship among the remaining elements is unchanged.

Each teacher will be classified as Distinguished, Effective, Developing or Ineffective based on their summary performance rating (i.e., number of points received) as shown below.

Summary Performance Rating	Classification
80+	Distinguished
70-79	Effective
60-69	Developing
Below 60	Ineffective

Professional growth plans will be tailored to teachers based on their overall summary performance rating. Teacher performance may be a consideration in providing additional leadership roles. Teachers performing at a Distinguished or Effective level of performance will be placed in a 3-year Individualized Growth Plan. Teachers performing at a Developing level will be placed in a 1-year Monitored Growth Plan, while teachers rated as Ineffective will be placed in a 1-year Improvement Plan. Descriptions of each of these professional growth plan follow.

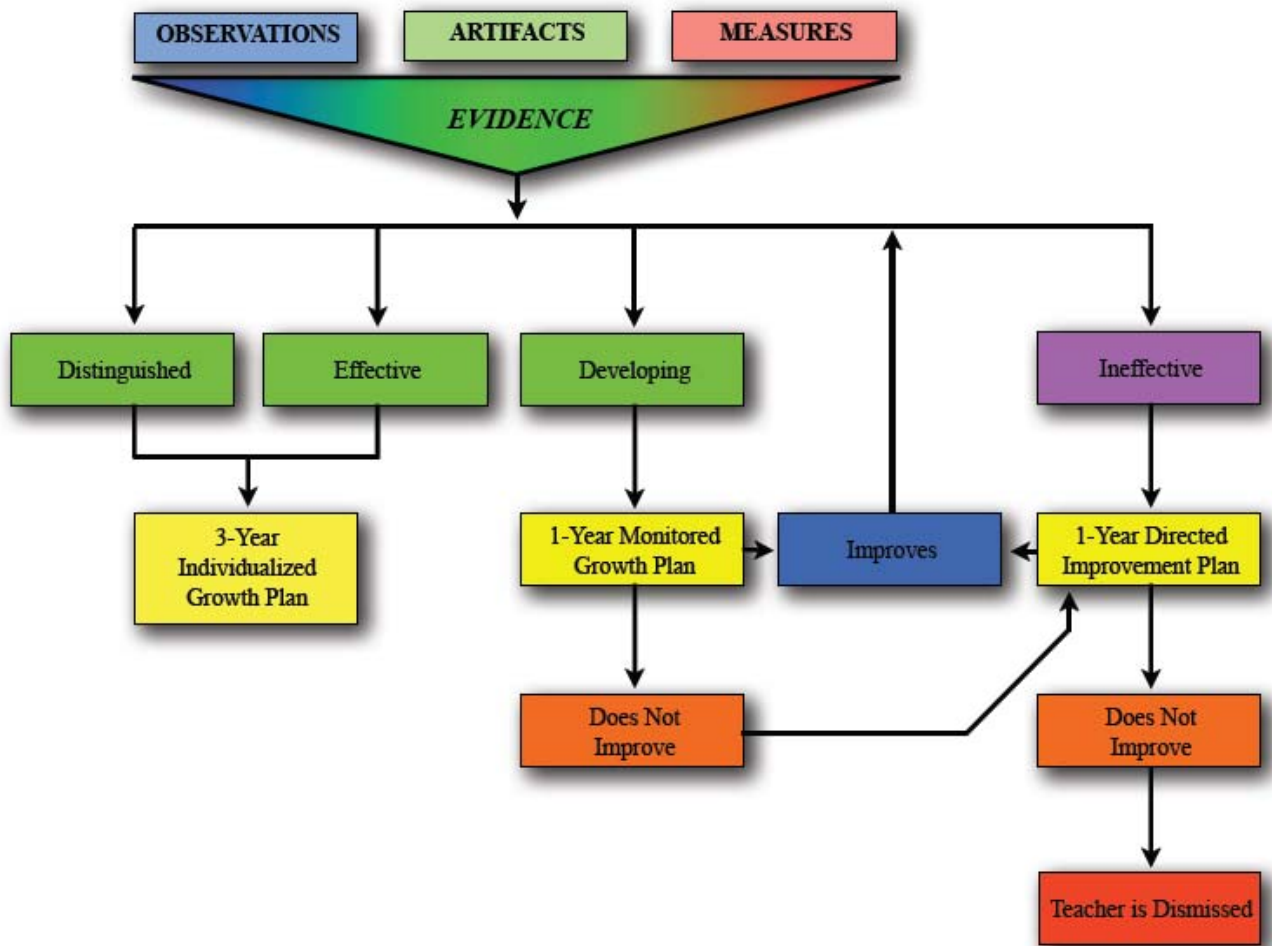


Figure 3  
Tailored Professional Growth Plan

### ***Individualized Growth Plan***

Continuing contract teachers with a summary performance classification of “Effective” or “Distinguished” shall be exempt from Components #4 and #7 and, will develop a 3-year growth plan that includes all items in Component #2, plus a longer term individual professional development goal. They will be placed on a three year cycle for summary review. [Note: The review of goals shall be based upon the average over the 3-year cycle.] Teachers in this category will continue to participate in the other components. If an administrator has evidence that a teacher is no longer performing at this level, they may be placed into an annual evaluation cycle.

### ***Monitored Growth Plan***

A continuing contract teacher with a summary performance classification of “Developing” shall be placed on a Monitored Growth Plan.

A Monitored Growth Plan shall, at a minimum, identify the Standards to be improved, the goals to be accomplished, the activities the teacher should undertake, timeline to achieve a performance classification of “Effective” and another teacher assigned to assist the teacher.

A teacher on a Monitored Growth Plan who subsequently receives a summary performance classification of “Effective” or “Distinguished” shall have successfully completed the Plan. A teacher who subsequently receives a summary performance classification of “Developing” or “Ineffective” shall be placed on a Directed Improvement Plan.

### ***Directed Improvement Plan***

A continuing contract teacher with a summary performance classification of “Ineffective” or “Developing” for 2 sequential years shall be placed on a Directed Growth Plan.

The Directed Improvement Plan shall, at a minimum, identify the Standards to be improved, the goals to be accomplished, the activities the teacher shall undertake, timeline to achieve a performance classification of “Effective” and another teacher assigned to assist the teacher.

Any teacher on a Directed Improvement Plan will be observed by a second administrator, who will participate in the determination of the summary performance classification. A teacher who subsequently receives a summary performance classification of “Effective” or “Distinguished” shall have successfully completed the Plan. A teacher who subsequently receives a summary performance classification of “Developing” or “Ineffective” will, with the approval of the superintendent, be presented to the School Committee for a dismissal hearing.

### **Probationary Teachers**

All probationary teachers shall be placed on a monitored growth for each year of the probationary period. An administrator must generally rate a final year probationary teacher with a summary performance classification of “Effective” or “Distinguished” on the most recent Teacher Summary Rating Form before recommending that teacher for continuing contract status.

# Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth Rubric

## ➤ NBPTS Core Proposition #1 - Teachers are committed to students and their learning.

**Standard 1.1 - Teacher recognizes individual differences in their students and adjusts practice accordingly.**

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Unaware or unable to identify individual student learning needs within his/her classroom. Instructional practice is uniform without adaptation for individual student needs or learning styles.	Limited level of awareness of individual student needs and learning styles. Occasionally adapts instructional practice to meet these individual student needs and learning styles.	Moderate level of awareness of individual student needs and learning styles. Frequently adapts instructional practice to meet these individual student needs and learning styles.	High level of awareness of individual student needs and learning styles. Consistently adapts Instructional practice to meet these individual student needs and learning styles.

### Possible evidence

- Uses information on students to inform lesson objectives, plans and instructional strategies
- Includes differentiated goals/activities to address lesson plans and provide for student success
- Uses multiple modes of teaching toward mastery
- Other

**Standard 1.2 - Teacher has an understanding of how students develop and learn and know the backgrounds, abilities, and interests of students.**

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Makes connections that may be very weak or absent with the students and caregivers.	Makes occasional connections that are general and/or sporadic with the students and caregivers which increase teacher knowledge of the student.	Makes regular connections that are clear and ongoing with the students and caregivers which increase teacher knowledge of the student.	Makes frequent connections that are strong and ongoing with the students and caregivers which increase teacher knowledge of the student.

### Possible evidence

- Engages other adults to learn about students
- Engages in conversations with students about high interest topics
- Communicates in multiple ways (with caregivers)
- Acknowledges differences in student backgrounds
- Meets the needs of parents whose first language is not English
- Other

**Standard 1.3 - Teacher treats students equitably and fosters a stimulating and collaborative environment where all students are encouraged to participate.**

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Establishes an inconsistent classroom environment where few students participate and work, collaboratively, toward a safe and effective learning environment.	Establishes an inconsistent classroom environment where some students participate and work, collaboratively, toward a safe and effective learning environment.	Establishes a classroom community that is supportive. Most students take intellectual risks, participate and work collaboratively toward a safe and effective learning environment.	Establishes a classroom community that is equitable, accessible, and fair. Virtually all students take intellectual risks, participate and work, collaboratively, toward a safe and effective learning environment.

### Possible evidence

- Environment encourages students to express their answers and ideas
- Models strategies to diffuse stress and build rapport with students
- Feedback is timely, specific and provided in various ways, such as written comments, conferences, non-verbal gestures
- Makes use of peer mentoring/evaluation techniques as a means of providing feedback to students learning
- Groups students in a variety of ways to promote collaboration and effective learning
- Other

**Standard 1.4 - Teacher's mission extends beyond the cognitive capacity of students.**

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Develops classroom expectations that are inappropriate or absent, rarely addressing students' self-concept and motivation.	Develops classroom expectations that are inconsistent, sometimes addressing students' self-concept and motivation.	Develops classroom expectations that encourage character, aspirations, and civic virtues and address students' self-concept, motivation and an emerging sense of personal responsibility.	Develops classroom expectations that demand strong character, aspirations, and civic virtues and nurture students' self-concept, motivation and sense of personal responsibility.

### Possible evidence

- Communicates belief in students' abilities to accomplish challenging learning goals
- Encourages students to persevere in challenging situations
- Uses positive tone used when speaking with students
- Connects learning to needs and events present in the school, local community and the world
- Models behaviors that encourage students to treat others with respect
- Employs positive behavioral interventions and supports to encourage personal responsibility
- Other

## ➤ NBPTS Core Proposition #2 - Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.

### *Standard 2.1 - Teacher appreciates how knowledge in the subject is created, organized, and linked to other disciplines.*

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Presents factual information only. Rarely or never exposes students to critical thinking and higher order thinking skills.	Hints at, but does not explore organizing concepts and factual information. Provides limited exposure to critical thinking and higher order thinking skills. Presents some perspectives.	Addresses some, but not all organizing concepts as well as factual information. Frequently develops critical thinking and higher order thinking skills. Presents and critiques multiple perspectives.	Consistently addresses central organizing concepts as well as factual information, developing critical thinking and higher order thinking skills. Critiques and fosters multiple perspectives, questioning prevailing beliefs and assumptions to help themselves. Makes connections to other disciplines.

### Possible evidence

- Structures content around essential questions
- Employs higher order questioning strategies (Bloom's Taxonomy)
- Plans and integrates instruction and activities to highlight cross curricular connections
- Stays current in their content specialty (ies)
- Integrates literacy and language strategies in all content areas
- Other

### **Standard 2.2 - Teacher commands specialized knowledge of how to convey a subject to students.**

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Chooses instructional techniques based solely on ease and availability.	Generally teaches compatible with approved curriculum, chooses appropriate instructional techniques for most students. Has some knowledge of curricular resources, new materials, methods, technological developments.	Teaches consistent with approved curriculum, displays adequate pedagogical content knowledge by using information about students to choose appropriate instructional techniques. Frequently anticipates common misconceptions. Has knowledge of curricular resources, new materials, methods, technological developments and incorporates these into daily practice.	Teaches faithful with approved curriculum, displays strong pedagogical content knowledge by using information about students to choose the most appropriate instructional techniques. Consistently anticipates and addresses common misconceptions. Regularly expands knowledge of curricular resources, new materials, methods, technological developments and incorporates these into daily practice.

### Sample evidence

- Demonstrates short and long-term planning aligned with approved curriculum and/or standards
- Identifies appropriate learning goals and clearly communicates goals to students
- Uses strategies to check for understandings and address misconceptions
- Uses instructional strategies such as probing, redirection, and reinforcement to improve the quality of student responses
- Using a broad range of current tools and resources to support the learning goals
- Creates authentic tasks, problems and/or simulations
- Other

### **Standard 2.3 - Teacher generates multiple paths to knowledge.**

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Teacher demonstrates a particular method or strategy to be used by students to approach a set of problems or body of work.	Teacher provides more than one method or strategy to be used by students to approach a set of problems or body of work.	Teacher frequently provides multiple methods or strategies for students to approach issues from different angles, considering multiple criteria and multiple solutions.	Teacher consistently provides multiple methods or strategies for students to approach issues from different angles, considering multiple criteria and multiple solutions. Teacher challenges students to apply knowledge and pose new problems and solutions.

### Possible evidence

- Provides different options for student activities to address multiple intelligences
- Multiple solutions/strategies offered to, and accepted from students
- Offers options within curriculum for student choice
- Plans learning activities that build on student strengths, talents and learning preferences (i.e., music, art, movement, etc.)
- Integrates relevant modern technology to engage students and enhance learning
- Other

## ➤ NBPTS Core Proposition #3 - Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.

### *Standard 3.1 - Teacher calls on multiple methods to meet goals.*

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Uses limited instructional skills, learning environment remains the same regardless of the learning objectives.	Uses limited instructional skills, implementing them appropriately. Learning environment supports the learning objectives.	Uses a range of instructional skills knowing when to implement, structuring the learning environment to meet the learning objectives.	Uses a wide range of clear, consistent, and compelling instructional skills which successfully engage students in active learning. Knowing when to implement, structuring the learning environment to maximize the learning objectives.

### Possible evidence

- Goals are posted and drive instruction
- Students demonstrate that they understand the goals.
- Uses efficient methods for transitions and materials distribution.
- Physical arrangement fosters student learning and allows the teacher to monitor students
- Effectively engages and mobilizes other appropriate adults as teaching assistants.
- Maximizes instructional time
- Provides the time and process for students to reflect on the learning that has occurred
- Other

### *Standard 3.2 - Teacher orchestrates learning in group settings.*

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Sets low or inappropriate expectations for interactions with peers and teacher. Has not developed classroom management systems.	Sets appropriate basic expectations for interactions with peers and teacher. Helps students take responsibility for their own learning. Has developed limited classroom management systems that minimize disruption.	Sets social norms and higher expectations for interactions with peers and teacher. Helps students take responsibility for their own learning and that of their peers. Has well developed classroom management systems that minimize disruptions and facilitate learning.	Sets social norms and highest expectations for interactions with peers and teacher to focus on and enhance learning. Helps students adopt roles and responsibilities for their own learning and that of their peers. Has developed sophisticated classroom management systems that minimize disruptions and facilitate learning.

### Possible evidence

- Encourages students to build upon one another's answers and to stimulate dialogue among learners
- Teaches and models strategies to work effectively with others
- Deliberate decisions are made re student seating/grouping
- Teacher has clear purpose and plan for group work
- Employs effective and efficient routines and procedures that promote student interaction within groups
- Solicits connections from students and models how to listen and respond to other perspectives
- Encourages student independence combined with a sense of personal accountability to classmates
- Other

***Standard 3.3 - Teacher places a premium on student engagement.***

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Uses limited strategies and engages few students. Does not build upon student interests. Limited encouragement of students to overcome reluctance.	Uses some strategies to engage students and monitors that engagement. Builds upon student interests. Encourages students to overcome personal setbacks, doubts or reluctance.	Uses a variety of strategies to motivate. Engages most students and monitors that engagement. Bridges between current student knowledge and ability and their potential by building upon student interests. Encourages students to overcome personal setbacks, doubts or reluctance.	Uses a wide variety of strategies to motivate and engage virtually all students and monitors that engagement. Bridges between current student knowledge and ability and their potential by building and expanding upon student interests. Encourages students to overcome personal setbacks, doubts or reluctance to push them to a higher level of learning.

**Possible evidence**

- Communicates high expectations to all students
- Stimulates student interest and engagement
- Makes clear to students what they are expected to learn in a way that generates interest and engagement
- Makes connections to real life situations (e.g., extends knowledge that sparks student curiosity for learning beyond required coursework)
- Learning is active and requires participation of all students
- Other

***Standard 3.4 - Teacher regularly assesses student progress.***

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Little to no monitoring of individual or class learning. Uses limited evaluation methods. Provides limited feedback to students.	Seldom monitors individual or class learning and makes instructional, data-driven decisions. Uses some evaluation methods. Provides feedback to students.	Frequently monitors individual and class learning and makes instructional, data-driven decisions. Uses multiple evaluation methods. Provides constructive feedback to students, parents and self. Periodically engages students in self-assessment.	Consistently monitors individual and class learning and makes instructional, data-driven decisions. Understands the purposes, timing and focus of multiple evaluation methods and adjusts instruction accordingly. Provides constructive feedback in varied forms to students, parents and self. Regularly engages students in self-assessment.

**Possible evidence**

- Interprets students' facial expressions and other nonverbal behaviors to determine if further cues or explanations are needed.
- Moves among students to check progress and understanding and provides constructive feedback
- Uses multiple formative assessment techniques (such as observations, conversations, running records, summarizing, self and/or peer assessment, exit slips, and authentic tasks with rubrics) aligned to goals
- Uses assessment results in planning for individuals and groups and adjusts/differentiates instruction based on progress
- Other

➤ **NBPTS Core Proposition #4 - Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.**

***Standard 4.1 - Teacher is continually making difficult choices that test his/her judgment.***

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Inconsistently follows provided content scope and sequence using a limited variation of instructional strategies without regard to individual student needs or competencies	Follows provided content scope and sequence. Makes limited judgments about curricular objectives and instructional strategies based on individual student needs and assessed competencies	Demonstrates thorough knowledge of content scope and sequence. Makes informed judgments about curricular objectives and materials and instructional strategies based on clear understanding of individual student needs and assessed prior competencies	Demonstrates exemplary knowledge of content scope and sequence. Makes insightful judgments grounded in established theory about curricular objectives and materials and instructional strategies based on clear and consistent understanding of individual student needs and assessed prior competencies

**Possible evidence**

- Models and facilitates student use of higher-level thinking.
- Facilitates and productively guides student discussion
- Pursues divergent patterns and novel approaches to curricular objectives
- Demonstrates informed risk taking
- Other

***Standard 4.2 - Teacher seeks the advice of others and draws upon education research and scholarship to improve practice.***

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Does not reflect on their teaching in order to improve, nor solicit feedback from peers, and administrators.	Sometimes reflects on their teaching in order to improve, drawing upon best practices. Occasionally solicits feedback from peers and administrators.	Frequently reflects on their teaching in order to improve, drawing upon best practices. Often solicits feedback, including observations and critiques, from peers, students, parents, and administrators.	Continually reflects on their teaching in order to improve, drawing upon current research and best practices. Consistently solicits and incorporates feedback, including observations and critiques, from peers, students, parents, and administrators.

**Possible evidence**

- Shares ideas with and soliciting ideas from peers
- Initiates participation in PD workshops and coursework
- Creative/critical thinking strategies and activities utilized
- Reviews student feedback surveys incorporating results in professional development
- Invites peer observation and critique
- Other

➤ **NBPTS Core Proposition #5 - Teachers are members of learning communities.**

***Std 5.1 - Teacher contributes to school effectiveness by collaborating with other professionals.***

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Contributions to professional development and school-wide improvements are limited to those mandated by district policies regarding professional development and attendance.	Works on professional development and school-wide improvements in pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning experiences for students.	Works and collaborates on professional development and school-wide improvements in a continuous pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning experiences for students. May offer to take on leadership roles within their learning communities.	Initiates, works and collaborates on professional development and school-wide improvements in a continuous pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning experiences for students. Assumes proactive and creative leadership roles within and outside of their learning communities. Challenges negative attitudes and models a solution-oriented disposition.

**Possible evidence**

- Appropriately applies strategies for conflict resolution
- Participates in curriculum work and discussions (common core, etc..) at school and district level
- Initiate conversations with guidance, social work, other resources to support students
- Utilize RTI process for academic and non-academic concerns to get support for students (literacy, math, guidance, behavior)
- Works with unified arts teachers to integrate content and learning experiences
- Keeps apprised of 504 and IEP accommodations
- Works with colleagues across disciplines to find alternative/creative solutions for at-risk students
- Other

***Standard 5.2 - Teacher works collaboratively with parents.***

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Communicates in a limited fashion with guardians to inform them of their child's progress. Makes little or no attempt to address the physical, academic and social/emotional needs of each student.	Communicates with guardians inconsistently to inform them of their child's progress. Aware of the physical, academic, social/emotional needs of each student and attempts to address them.	Communicates with guardians by enlisting their support in fostering learning and good habits, informing them of their child's progress. Understands the familial barriers and the physical, academic, social/emotional needs of each student and employs skills and strategies to address them.	Communicates consistently with guardians, enlisting their support in fostering learning and good habits, informing them of school programs and their child's progress. Understands traditional cultural and familial barriers and the physical, academic, social/emotional needs of each student and employs skills and strategies to address them.

**Possible evidence**

- are partners with parents in the education of their children
- Provides constructive feedback to parents using rubrics, progress reports, conferences, communication logs.
- Considers the needs and schedules of families when planning classroom events
- Solicits parent feedback through surveys, meetings and/or technology
- Collaborates with parents to offer support for students outside of direct instruction
- Supports students before/after school

- Other

***Standard 5.3 - Teacher takes advantage of community resources.***

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Unaware of community's character. Unfamiliar with the community, its diversity and students' backgrounds.	Somewhat aware of community's character and its effects on students. Somewhat understands the community, its diversity and students' backgrounds as resources for learning.	Cultivates expanded knowledge about the community's character and its effects on students. Capitalizes on the community, its diversity and students' backgrounds as resources for learning.	Cultivates comprehensive knowledge about the community's character and its effects on school and students. Capitalizes on and engages the community, its diversity and students' backgrounds and employs them as powerful resources for learning.

**Possible evidence**

- Utilizes older students to engage/mentor younger students
- Directs students toward needed community resources as appropriate
- Actively encourages and uses parent and community volunteers
- Promotes field trips that connect history and culture to the students' community
- Uses community based learning projects (e.g. oral history, cultural journalism, etc.)
- Other

***Standard 5.4 - Teacher considers his/her professional ethics in interactions with students, colleagues, primary caregivers, and the public.***

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence
Limited understanding of basic standards of honesty, integrity, confidentiality and discretion in their words and actions; neglects to consider the needs of students when interacting with colleagues, students, and the public; bases judgment on hearsay rather than hard information; Demonstrates limited awareness and compliance with school and district policies regarding professional behavior and confidentiality.	Displays basic standards of honesty, integrity, confidentiality and discretion in their words and actions; sometimes considers the needs of students when interacting with colleagues, students, and the public; may base judgment on hearsay rather than hard information; attempts to demonstrate awareness and compliance with school and district policies regarding professional behavior and confidentiality.	Displays high standards of honesty, integrity, confidentiality and discretion in their words and actions; routinely considers the needs of students when interacting with colleagues, students, and the public; bases judgments and decisions on hard information rather than on hearsay and tradition; Consistently complies with school and district policies regarding professional behavior and confidentiality.	Facilitates a professional vision by displaying the highest standards of honesty, integrity, confidentiality and discretion in their words and actions; consistently considers the needs of students when interacting with colleagues, students, and the public; uses influence to convince others of the importance of maintaining this vision when interacting with colleagues, students and the public; consistently adheres to and upholds school and district policies regarding professional behavior and confidentiality.

**Possible evidence**

- Bases judgment and recommendations on hard information rather than on hearsay and tradition
- Operates with best interest of students in mind
- Models and creates conditions in which students and adults act altruistically
- Influences other members of the learning community to be good citizens and contribute in a positive manner to the broader community.
- Recognizes potential bias in the learning community and intervenes when practices may marginalize students
- Is a positive role model for the learning community
- Other

## Student Growth Measurement (based upon present measurements)

### Goal Achievement (1-10 points)

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence (1 Point)	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence (3 Points)	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence (8 Points)	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence (10 Points)
No improvement over base and less than 50% of students are meeting growth target(s).	Improvement over base but less than 55% of students are meeting growth target(s).	55% or more of students are meeting growth target(s)	Maximum stated goal of 65% reached or surpassed on all student growth measurements.

## Student Learning Goal

### Goal Development (1-4 points)

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence (1 Point)	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence (2 Points)	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence (3 Points)	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence (4 Points)
. Teacher did not bring a student learning goal to the Fall Conference.. A goal was developed with the Administrator.	Teacher did bring a student learning goal to the Fall Conference, but the goal was not clearly defined and measurable. A goal was developed with the Administrator.	Teacher did bring a clearly defined and measurable student learning goal to the Fall Conference. The goal was edited in the Fall Conference with Administrator.	Clearly defined and measurable student learning goal and directly tied to school and district objectives.

### Goal Achievement (1-10 points)

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence (1 Point)	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence (3 Points)	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence (8 Points)	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence (10 Points)
No measurable progress toward achieving goal.	Some measurable progress toward achieving goal.	Goal achieved.	Goal surpassed.

## Professional Growth Goal

### Goal Development (1-4 points)

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence (1 Point)	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence (2 Points)	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence (3 Points)	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence (4 Points)
No defined professional growth goal.	Somewhat defined professional growth goal.	Clearly defined and measurable professional growth goal.	Clearly defined and measurable professional growth goal with application to school and district objectives.

### Goal Achievement (1-4 points)

<b>Ineffective</b> Little or no evidence (1 Point)	<b>Developing</b> Limited evidence (2 Points)	<b>Effective</b> Clear evidence (3 Points)	<b>Distinguished</b> Clear, consistent and convincing evidence (4 Points)
No measurable progress toward achieving goal.	Some measurable progress toward achieving goal.	Goal achieved.	Goal surpassed.

# TEPG Summary Rating Form

*For use in the teacher self-assessment, classroom observations, and the summary review.*

Name:

Date completed:

School:

School year:

Evaluator:

Evaluator title:

Status (check one)

☐ Probationary Teacher

☐ Continuing Contract Teacher

## Part I: Instructional Practice Performance Ratings

Core Proposition 1: *Teachers are committed to students and their learning*

Ineffective-1  
Developing -2  
Effective-3  
Distinguished-4

1.1	Teacher recognizes individual differences in students and adjusts their practice accordingly.				
1.2	Teacher has an understanding of how students develop and learn and know the backgrounds, abilities, and interests of students.				
1.3	Teacher treats students equitably and fosters a stimulating and collaborative environment where all students are encouraged to participate.				
1.4	Teacher's mission extends beyond the cognitive capacity of their students.				

➤ Strengths:

➤ Growth opportunity:

➤ Other comments:

Core Proposition 2: <i>Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to student</i>		1	2	3	4
2.1	Teacher appreciates how knowledge in their subject is created, organized, and linked to other disciplines.				
2.2	Teacher commands specialized knowledge of how to convey a subject to students.				
2.3	Teacher generates multiple paths to knowledge.				

- Strengths:
- Growth opportunity:
- Other comments:

Core Proposition 3: *Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning* 1 2 3 4

3.1	Teacher calls on multiple methods to meet their goals.				
3.2	Teacher orchestrates learning in group settings.				
3.3	Teacher places a premium on student engagement.				
3.4	Teacher regularly assesses student progress.				

- Strengths:
- Growth opportunity:
- Other comments:

Core Proposition 4: *Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience* 1 2 3 4

4.1	Teacher is continually making difficult choices that test their judgment.				
4.2	Teacher seeks the advice of others and draws upon education research and scholarship to improve their practice.				

- Strengths:
- Growth opportunity:
- Other comments:

Core Proposition 5: *Teachers are members of learning communities* 1 2 3 4

5.1	Teacher contributes to school effectiveness by collaborating with other professionals.				
5.2	Teacher works collaboratively with parents.				
5.3	Teacher takes advantage of community resources.				
5.4	Teacher considers their professional ethics in all interactions				

- Strengths:
- Growth opportunity:
- Other comments:

6.0 Student Learning Goal 1 2 3 4

<b>6.1</b>	Goal Development				
------------	------------------	--	--	--	--

- Strengths:
- Growth opportunity:
- Other comments:

1 2 3 4

<b>6.2</b>	Goal Achievement				
------------	------------------	--	--	--	--

- Strengths:
- Growth opportunity:
- Other comments:

## 7.0 Professional Growth Goal

1 2 3 4

<b>7.1</b>	Goal Development				
------------	------------------	--	--	--	--

- Strengths:
- Growth opportunity:
- Other comments:

1 2 3 4

<b>7.2</b>	Goal Achievement				
------------	------------------	--	--	--	--

- Strengths:
- Growth opportunity:
- Other comments:

## Required Signatures

Teacher Signature:

Date

Administrator / Evaluator Signature:

Date

Teacher Comments Attached (circle one):

Yes

No

Administrator / Evaluator Signature :

Date

(Signature indicates question above regarding comments has been addressed)

Note: The teacher's signature on this form represents neither acceptance nor approval of the report. It does, however, indicate that the teacher has reviewed the report with the evaluator and may reply in writing. The signature of the administrator or evaluator verifies that the report has been reviewed and that the proper process has been followed according to the policy.

# TEPG GOAL SETTING FORM

## STUDENT LEARNING

School Student Learning Goal	1	
	2	
	3	

My student learning goal is...
How is your goal linked to your school's student learning goal?
How will attainment of my goal be measured?
How will progress toward my goal be monitored?
Describe the methods / strategies / activities that will be used to accomplish my goal?
What resources or support will be needed to reach my goal?

TEPG GOAL SETTING FORM

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher                      Date    /    /   

\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator                      Date    /    /

My professional growth goal is...
What National Board Standard(s) does my goal relate to?
How will attainment of my goal be measured?
How will progress toward my goal be monitored?
Describe the methods / strategies / activities that will be used to accomplish my goal?
What resources or support will be needed to reach my goal?

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Date

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator Date



## Peer Observation Summary

**School**

**Year:**

--

**Teacher:**

--

**List three teachers whom you would be comfortable observing you and at least three standards in Core Propositions #1, #2 or #3 that you would like to have reviewed:**

**Teacher 1:**

--

**Teacher 2:**

--

**Teacher 3:**

--

**Standards:**

--

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher's Initials

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Peer Observer**

(selected by Principal)

**Three Standards:**

(selected by Principal)

--

--

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's Initials

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**To Be Completed by Teacher and Peer Observer:**

**DATES:**

**Pre Conference:**

_____
-------

**Observation:**

_____
-------

**Post Conference:**

_____
-------

**Teacher Signature**

--

**Observer Signature**

--

*Original to Human Resources*



## Pilot Peer Observation Summary

Objective: Teachers will observe a colleague from their cohort in order to become more familiar with TEPG, Core Propositions #1, #2 and/or #3 and to offer input to refine the peer observation process.

**School Year:**

**Teacher Observing:**

**Teacher Observed:**

**To Be Completed by Teacher and Peer Observer:**

**DATES:**

**Pre Conference:**

**Observation:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Post Conference:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher Signature**

**Observer Signature**

**Comments to improve and further refine the peer observation process:**

*Original to Human Resources for processing of \$100 grant-funded stipend to be paid the observer.*

## Appendix 6

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### *Maine Educator Effectiveness Council Agendas*



## MAINE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS COUNCIL

### MEETING #1

*TUESDAY MAY 29, 2012; 1-4 PM; CROSS BLDG. RM #541*

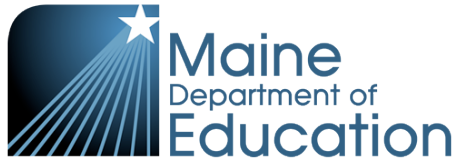
#### Outcomes

1. Review charge, membership, and scope of the work expected of the Maine Educator Effectiveness Council;
2. Understand the criteria of the ESEA Flexibility application program, especially as it relates to Principle III and Educator Effectiveness;
3. Develop initial list of guiding principles for a statewide educator effectiveness system and identify critical questions, resources, and activities that will support the work of the Council; and,
4. Determine dates for future meetings

#### Agenda

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| 1 PM     | Welcome, introductions, and overview of the agenda  |
| 1:10 PM  | Review the charge of the Maine Educator Effectiveness Council and describe its relationship to the overall strategy for completing and submitting an ESEA Flexibility application   |
| 1:45 PM  | Develop initial norms and decision-making processes for the group   |
| 2:00 PM  | Brief overview of the ESEA Flexibility program and application with particular focus on Educator Effectiveness.   |
| 2:30 PM. | Break   |
| 2:45 PM  | Development of guiding principles supporting the design and implementation of a fair, rigorous, and meaningful system of evaluation and support. Enumerate preliminary list of activities, questions, and resources to support the Council's work |
| 3:45 PM  | Determination of meeting schedule and next steps  |

**\*Next Meeting: TBA**



## MAINE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS COUNCIL

### MEETING #2

*WEDNESDAY JUNE 20, 2012; 9 AM – 3 PM*

*CROSS BLDG. ROOM #103-A*

### Outcomes

1. Elect Co-Chair;
2. Review norms and determine process for making decisions and for reporting recommendations;
3. Review and discuss intriguing ideas worth further exploration from readings;
4. Begin learning about current educator effectiveness being done around Maine;
5. Revisit the draft list of candidate principles to guide the work of the Council and – to the extent possible – determine whether consensus is possible in more or more areas; and,
6. Determine dates for future meetings

### Agenda

9 AM	Welcome, introductions, and overview of the agenda
9:10 AM	Review the responsibilities of the Co-Chair and elect a member to serve in this capacity
9:30 AM	Discussion: from your readings, what ideas come to mind that are worth exploring further?
10:30 AM	Break
10:45 AM	Begin to discuss the set of Council duties using the MEEC deliverables and emerging principles as a framework
12:15 PM	Lunch
1 PM	Overview of the Maine Schools for Excellence initiative: Lessons learned and implications for the work of the Council
2 PM	Continue to discuss the set of Council duties using the MEEC deliverables and emerging principles as a framework
2:45 PM	Determination of meeting schedule and next steps
3 PM	Closure

**\*Next Meeting: TBA**



## MAINE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS COUNCIL

### MEETING #3

*MONDAY JULY 9, 2012; 9 AM – 3 PM*

*CROSS BLDG. ROOM 103*

### Outcomes

1. Clarify the roles of the facilitator and co-chairs;
2. Review norms and determine the council's policy for making decisions and for reporting recommendations;
3. Review and discuss draft framework for organizing the work process;
4. Discuss and determine the means by which the council is to "chunk" the work before it (workgroups, whole group discussion, etc);
5. Begin work on definitions of 'teacher' and 'principal'
6. Determine a process or set of standards for determining the proper balance between local control and statewide uniformity
7. Determine dates for future meetings

### Agenda

9 AM	Welcome, introductions, and overview of the agenda
9:05 AM	Briefing on progress of ESEA Flexibility Workgroups
9:15 AM	Briefing on NEA Representative Assembly
9:25 AM	Discussion on roles of facilitator and co-chairs
9:35 AM	Review draft of the council's decision-making policy
9:45 AM	Review and discussion on "Decision Matrix" document
10:30 AM	Break
10:45 AM	Discussion on how the Council can best organize itself and its work
11:45 AM	Lunch
12:30 PM	Discussion: Definition of 'teacher' and 'principal' for this work
1:30 PM	Discussion: Standards for determining the proper balance between statewide uniformity and local flexibility
2:30 PM	Determination of meeting schedule and next steps
2:45 PM	Comments from the public
3 PM	Closure



## MAINE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS COUNCIL MEETING #4

FRIDAY JULY 20, 2012; 9 AM – 3 PM  
CROSS BLDG. ROOM 103

### Outcomes

1. Finalize language regarding Council decision-making policy
2. Understand the basic structure and elements of a performance evaluation and professional growth system (PE/PG system)
3. Discuss and decide what professional practice standards must be used in PE/PG systems for teachers and for principals
4. Determine dates for future meetings

### Agenda

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| 9 AM     | Welcome, introductions, and overview of the agenda  |
| 9:05 AM  | Briefing on progress of ESEA Flexibility Workgroups   |
| 9:15 AM  | Review draft of the Council's decision-making policy  |
| 9:25 AM  | Quick review of the basic elements of a PE/PG system  |
| 9:35 AM  | Discuss the pros and cons of various professional practice standards for teachers: National Board, InTASC, Danielson Framework, others?   |
| 10:30 AM | Break   |
| 10:45 AM | Discuss/ Decide, with regard to professional practice standards for teachers, whether to recommend that the State: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Adopt one of these sets of standards</li><li>B. Allow districts to choose from among a fixed list of sets of standards</li><li>C. Create our own set of standards, by blending models or otherwise</li><li>D. Develop a set of criteria for the adoption of standards, which would allow districts to choose one of these sets of standards or a set like these that they either develop or adopt</li></ol>   |
| 11:45 AM | Lunch   |
| 12:30 PM | Discuss the pros and cons of various professional practice standards for principals, e.g., ISSLC, National Board, others?   |
| 1:30 PM  | Discuss/ Decide, with regard to professional practice standards for principals, whether to recommend that the State: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Adopt one of these sets of standards</li><li>B. Allow districts to choose from among a fixed list of sets of standards</li><li>C. Create our own set of standards, by blending models or otherwise</li><li>D. Develop a set of criteria for the adoption of standards, which would allow districts to choose one of these sets of standards or a set like these that they either develop or adopt</li></ol> |
| 2:30 PM  | Determination of meeting schedule and next steps  |
| 2:45 PM  | Comments from the public  |
| 3 PM     | Closure   |



## MAINE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS COUNCIL

### MEETING #6

FRIDAY AUGUST 10, 2012; 9 AM – 3 PM

CROSS BLDG. ROOM 600

#### Outcomes

1. Review draft language regarding the use of rubrics aligned with professional practice standards
2. Review preliminary determination of educators impacted by definition of 'teacher' and 'principal' in this system
3. Increase understanding of the elements comprising the Colorado educator effectiveness model
4. Continue to discuss possible 'other measures' for inclusion in the system
5. Use the decision matrix to draft a work plan to determine the next topics to address during the next meeting and through the end of October.

#### Agenda

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| 9 AM     | Welcome, introductions, and overview of the agenda  |
| 9:05 AM  | Briefing on progress of ESEA Flexibility Workgroups   |
| 9:25 AM  | Recap initial determination of educators impacted by the definition of 'teacher' and 'principal' in the system  |
| 9:40 AM  | Review draft language regarding the use of rubrics aligned with professional practice standards for teachers and principals. Reach decision.  |
| 10:30 AM | Break   |
| 10:45 AM | Overview of Colorado model focusing on description of other measures, how they are determined, and how they are factored into a rating<br>Review preliminary list of other measures used. Discuss whether to include any – or suggest others – to include in Maine's system |
| 11:50 AM | Comments from the public  |
| 12 PM    | Lunch   |
| 12:45 PM | Continue other measures discussion  |
| 2:00 PM  | Determination of agenda items for next meeting, meeting dates, and work plan  |
| 2:45 PM  | Comments from the public  |
| 3 PM     | Closure   |

**\*Next Meeting: Friday August 24, 2012, 9 AM – 3 PM**

**Cross Office Building Room 103**



## MAINE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS COUNCIL

### MEETING #6

FRIDAY AUGUST 10, 2012; 9 AM – 3 PM

CROSS BLDG. ROOM 600

#### Outcomes

1. Review draft language regarding the use of rubrics aligned with professional practice standards
2. Review preliminary determination of educators impacted by definition of 'teacher' and 'principal' in this system
3. Increase understanding of the elements comprising the Colorado educator effectiveness model
4. Continue to discuss possible 'other measures' for inclusion in the system
5. Use the decision matrix to draft a work plan to determine the next topics to address during the next meeting and through the end of October.

#### Agenda

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| 9 AM     | Welcome, introductions, and overview of the agenda  |
| 9:05 AM  | Briefing on progress of ESEA Flexibility Workgroups   |
| 9:25 AM  | Recap initial determination of educators impacted by the definition of 'teacher' and 'principal' in the system  |
| 9:40 AM  | Review draft language regarding the use of rubrics aligned with professional practice standards for teachers and principals. Reach decision.  |
| 10:30 AM | Break   |
| 10:45 AM | Overview of Colorado model focusing on description of other measures, how they are determined, and how they are factored into a rating<br>Review preliminary list of other measures used. Discuss whether to include any – or suggest others – to include in Maine's system |
| 11:50 AM | Comments from the public  |
| 12 PM    | Lunch   |
| 12:45 PM | Continue other measures discussion  |
| 2:00 PM  | Determination of agenda items for next meeting, meeting dates, and work plan  |
| 2:45 PM  | Comments from the public  |
| 3 PM     | Closure   |

**\*Next Meeting: Friday August 24, 2012, 9 AM – 3 PM**

**Cross Office Building Room 103**



## MAINE EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS COUNCIL

### MEETING #6

FRIDAY AUGUST 10, 2012; 9 AM – 3 PM

CROSS BLDG. ROOM 600

### Outcomes

1. Review the progress to date;
2. Determine any modifications in the way the work is organized;
3. Provide an update on the status of Maine's ESEA Flexibility request and gather feedback on the plan described in the summary; and,
4. Review the information about student learning and growth in the State Longitudinal Data System and generate related questions, needs, and issues for subsequent meetings.

### Agenda

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| 9 AM     | Welcome, introductions, and overview of the agenda   |
| 9:05 AM  | Reviewing the progress of the Maine Educator Effectiveness Council. Implications for next steps  |
| 10:30 AM | Break  |
| 10:45 AM | Reviewing the charge of the Maine Educator Effectiveness Council. Implications for next steps (continued)  |
| 11:30 AM | Briefing on progress of ESEA Flexibility Workgroups & feedback on summary  |
| 11:50 AM | Comments from the public   |
| 12 PM    | Lunch  |
| 12:45 PM | Informational presentation on Maine's State Longitudinal Data System. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clarifying questions</li><li>• Generation of list of needs, questions, and issues for the MEEC to address during future meetings</li></ul> |
| 2:45 PM  | Comments from the public   |
| 3 PM     | Closure  |

**\*Next Meeting: Friday September 14, 2012, 9 AM – 3 PM**

**Cross Office Building Room 103**